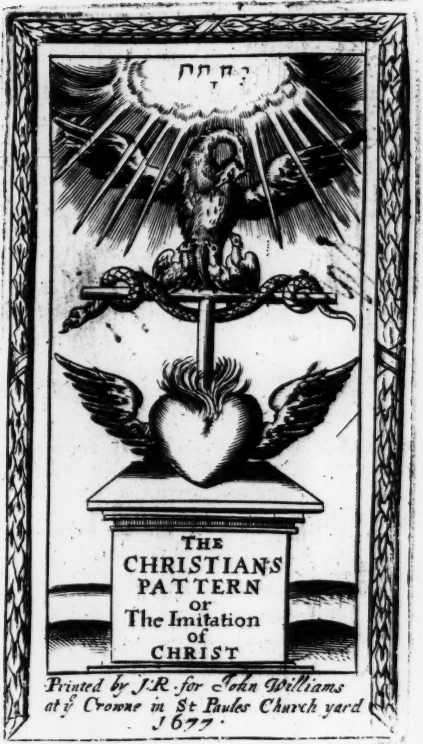


*Printed by J.R. for John Williams*
*at y^e Crowne in St Paules Church yard*
*1677.*

Samer 597

# THE CHRISTIANS PATTERN,

OR

## A DIVINE TREATISE

Of the

## IMITATION of CHRIST.

Tanner 597

*Written Originally in Latin, by*

*THOMAS* of *KEMPIS*,

above 200. Years since.

With a PREFACE

CONTAINING,

An Account of the *Worth* and *Usefulness* of this *Treatise*.

Some *Directions*, for the better reading of *This* or any other Spiritual *Book*; and for the attainment of Divine Knowledge.

An Account of the *former* English Translations, and of this Edition.

Wherein the English is brought to a near Conformity to the Authors Latin.

*LONDON*,

Printed by *J.R.* for *John Williams*, at the sign of the *Crown* in St. *Pauls* Church-yard.

1677.

Thom. Tanner 597

To the

# READER.

*Amongſt the many* Conſiderations *which clearly evince the great* Worth *and ſpecial* Excellencies *of this divine* Treatiſe, *ſuch as* Theſe *would not be unremembred.*

*That it hath been tranſlated into very many languages*, viz. Greek, Italian, French, Spaniſh, Dutch, Engliſh, &c. *Some Travellers affirm they have ſeen it alſo in the* Turkiſh *language. And in ſome of theſe languages, as well as in the Latin in which originally it was written, it hath been very often printed; Scarce hath any other Practical and Devotional Diſcourſe been publiſhed oftner, and that with ſo general an approbation and acceptance; This golden* Manual *having had the ſingular happineſs & priviledg to be kindly entertain'd by Chriſtians of different denominations, Romaniſts, & Contra-Romaniſts whether thoſe of* Luthers, *or thoſe of* Calvin's *way.*

*Amongſt the* Lutherans, *or rather the* Reformers *of the* Lutherans, *it hath been always highly eſteemed by the Followers (if I may ſo call them) of* John Arndt, *ſometimes Superintendant of* Luneburgh, *another* Salvian *in his generation; whoſe buſineſs it was to convince men*

*of their unchriſtian ſpirits and lives, & to awaken them to the minding of the true Chriſtianity in life and power; that ſo they might not place* the Kingdom of God in meats and drinks, *in meer Opinions and outward obſervances, in a Speculative and Notional Chriſtianity, an unfruitful Faith, a dry form of Knowledg and Godlineſs: but might make it their great care to become really better, a people reformed in deed and truth, to excel and outſhine others in every grace and virtue, to ſhew forth the power of Chriſt's death and reſurrection within them, to crucify the old man, that the body of ſin might be deſtroy'd, and that they might riſe up to a new life, the holy, harmleſs, ſweet and humble life of Chriſt; and that by living ſoberly, righteouſly & godlily in this preſent world they might adorn the doctrin of God our Saviour, which is by the Apoſtle ſtyl'd* the doctrin, *or,* the truth, after Godlineſs. *To ſuch purpoſes and reſpects of trueſt charity and pitty to the good and ſpiritual intereſt of Souls were the Writings of this faithful Servant of God deſigned; yet ſuch plain and ſincere dealing met (as it is the lot of good* Micaiahs) *with great oppoſitions & cenſurings, but how unjuſtly and undeſervedly hath been largely diſcovered by others; for me to travel in this Argument would be too great a Digreſſion.*

*Amongſt thoſe of* Calvin's *way (to omit o-*

*thers)*

*others*)G. Voetius *Professor at* Utrecht, *having in his* Bibliotheca studiosi Theologiæ *commended some Practical books, he adds*---ante omnes Thomæ à Kempis Imitationem Christi. *Not much unlike to* Voetius *his* ante omnes *is that of the Italian Translator in his Preface to the Reader*, viz. *that amongst the many Spiritual books which are extant, this Treatise ought to be accounted* o il primo, o tra'primi, *either the Chief, or amongst the Chief; and that this is not his private judgment, but the common sense and esteem of all those that have* gusto dicose spirituali, *such as have* (*not a meer outward, natural and speculative knowledg, but*) *an inward divine sense, a right perception, a true tast and relish of spiritual things.*

*But to pass by all other Considerations, that which doth fully speak the true* Worth *and* Excellency *of this Treatise, is the main* Design *&* Scope, *the* Matter *and* Argument *of the Book, being indeed the very same with the Intendment and Design of the Gospel, the Scope & End of Christianity, which in short is* The being transformed into the Image of Christ, *or, in our Author's language*, the Imitation *or* Following of Christ *in Humility, Patience, Benignity and Goodness, entire Self-resignation to the will of God*, &c. *In these and the like particulars doth the Author place our Resemblance*

*of Christ, which yet are not here spoken to in a formal Method, but are scattered through this Treatise, yet so as to be easily observed by a serious Reader.*

*Now there is nothing more precious, more dear to God than his own Image, his own Life from the which Wicked men are said to be estranged,* Ephes.4. *And there is nothing higher, nothing more excellent than the* Participation of the Divine Nature, *than the Resemblance of God who is the first and Supreme Excellency, than* the Imitation of Christ, *who is the highest, the most perfect and lovely Pattern and* Idea *of all purity and holiness. Besides there is nothing more essential to the constituting of a true Christian, than the denying of himself, the taking up of his Cross, and following of Christ.*

*This is a most true and faithful saying, though it be* σκληρὸς λόγος, *an* hard saying *and unpleasing doctrin to many specious Christians, who would indeed be advantaged by the death of Christ, but would not be disturbed by the indispensable necessity of living his life: nor would they be planted in the likeness of his death in their dying to sin and the life of the world, in crucyfying the flesh with the affections and lusts, so as they should not so much live, as Christ live in them, and will his own will in them. There is now throughout the Christian world much discoursing*

*courſing and much diſputing concerning Chriſt, but where is the* ſo walking even as he walked! *there is much* naming of the name of Chriſt, (*and I think never more*) *but how little is there of* the departing from all iniquity, *either the more groſs and notorious, or the more cloſe and ſpiritual iniquity? there are very many that are rather for ſaying, Lord, Lord, than for doing his will. Amongſt the divided Churches in Chriſtendom there be different Sects and Parties that ſay,* Lo here is Chriſt, *and* Lo there is Chriſt; *and each of theſe is very ready to reprobate and anathematize all others, very forward to unchriſtian and unſaint all that are not of their mode and are not conformed to their likeneſs in every opinion and practiſe, though thoſe whom they condemn may be conformed to the likeneſs of Chriſt in righteouſneſs and true holineſs; and withal each of them is very ready to expreſs that vain glorious and contracted ſpirit of the* Jews *who would engroſs all* Meſſias *unto themſelves, and herein they pride and boaſt themſelves: whereas for all their confidence and clamor* [Lo here is Chriſt] *there only is Chriſt indeed, where the life of Jeſus is manifeſted; Chriſt dwells not where he is but named and talkt on, but where he is believed on, obeyed and followed.*

*Having given this brief intimation of the* Sum and Subſtance *of this Treatiſe, it would*

*not*

*not be unmention'd, That though the general ſcope and drift of this Book be the tranſcribing of ſo glorious a Pattern as is* the Life of Chriſt, *God manifeſt in the fleſh; And though the Titles of ſome Chapters may ſeem to reſpect ſome particular Doctrins in Religion which are of another importance, yet all along in this Treatiſe there are to be found the ſeeds & principles of the moſt neceſſary and Practical Truths, together with many inward and experimental diſcoveries of* the Kingdom of God in us, *and the Proceſs of Regeneration: ſo that a ſerious Chriſtian may meet with that which will be very proper and ſuitable to him to conſider & make uſe of, in the ſeveral exerciſes of his Chriſtian warfare, in the ſeveral ſtates and tempers he may be in, the many varieties of tentations and difficulties he is to paſs through, while he is in the wilderneſs, and before he enters into the reſt of God. The truth of this is faithfully witneſſed to by many religious and holy Souls, who have profeſt that in the reading of this Spiritual Book they have found that which hath been (through the goodneſs of God) very profitable to direct and inſtruct, to revive and comfort, to ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh them; in a word, ſeaſonably and fully to miniſter to the ſeveral needs and exigencies of their preſent ſtate and condition.*

*But it is alſo to be remembred, That* the great practical

practical Truths *of Religion, the Myſteries of the inward Kingdom of God, are beſt diſcerned by ſuch Readers as are ſincerely religious, ſuch as have in ſome meaſure read the ſame things in their own ſouls, and accordingly derive their knowledg of them rather* de venis experientiæ, *then* de commentariis, *as* Savanarola (*a Chriſtian of great experience & holineſs*) *doth phraſe it: ſuch as by doing the will of God know his doctrin; ſuch as by living the life of Chriſt, by following his ſteps, by ſuffering the will of God to rule in them as it did in Chriſt Jeſus, have attained to the knowing of God* κατὰ θεὸν δεῖ γνῶναι, as they ought to know. *This is that* Scientia ſapida & affectiva, *that inward, practical, that ſavory, experimental, feeling knowledg, which is frequently commended by our Author, who hath in ſeveral places of this Treatiſe ſcatter'd many uſeful Directions and Rules for the attainment of this* more excellent way *of knowing thoſe Truths which concern the truly Chriſtian life and practiſe.*

*As for any other kind of Readers, it is no wonder if they be of another ſenſe, if they ſee no form or comelineſs in this Treatiſe of* the Life of Chriſt, *as thoſe of the like ſpirit ſaw no beauty in Chriſt, when he lived on earth, that they ſhould deſire him, as the Prophet* Eſay *complains. It will be no wonder if they leſſen and deſpiſe it, becauſe*

*because the* great Practical Truths *so frequently prest here and insisted on* [such as, self-mortification, self-denial, a being crucified to the world, a purifying our selves as God is pure; a denudation, putting off and abrenunciation of self-will; hearty and universal obedience; entire self-resignation *&c.*] *are doctrins very grievous and troublesom to them, as being contrary to their corrupt ends & interests, their self-love, their love of the world and the things thereof, in which that they are deeply immerst is very plain to the discerning Christian. Such doctrins are a reproof to such spiritual Pharisees, and discover their being short of the* inward Kingdom *of God and the true* power of Godliness; *these men are unwilling to be religious and to purchase* the Pearl of great price *at such a rate as the parting with all for it: They are for a more easie and cheap religion, which costs them little but* bodily exercise, *less than the plucking out of their right eyes and cutting off of their right hands, their parting with their most dear and (as they think) convenient sins; less than the subduing of their passions and inordinate affections to the which it is manifest that they are enslaved; less than the entire observance of those most excellent (though most neglected)* Laws & Rules *of holy life delivered by our Saviour in his Sermon on the Mount,* Matth. 5, 6, 7. ch.

*Nor*

*Nor is there any thing in this Treatise to please the wanton curiosity and pride of* vain-spirited *Readers; here are none of the* great swelling words of vanity, *no high-soaring language, no airy speculations, no cloudy (yet empty and insignificant) expressions, nothing of affectation, no* canting *in Divinity, to gratifie the vain* Enthusiasts: *and therefore an unprejudiced Christian that seriously reads this book, may justly wonder at some Writers who have at least inconsiderately numbred the Author thereof,* Thomas à Kempis, *amongst the* Enthusiastick *transgressors; whereas if any of that way should chance to commend this Treatise, & thereby serve themselves, yet there is nothing in it that tends to the either begetting or feeding of that spiritual distemper: but the main scope and business of the Author is to oblige Christians to sobriety & humbleness of mind, to the simplicity of the life of Christ. Nor are there to be found here any* rapturous *expressions, but such as may be observed in other serious Christians, when they have the more full and inward Communion with God, and most affectionately cleave to him. And when such divinely enamour'd souls express most of* the Spirit of Love, *yet is not this* Spirit of Love *separated from* the Spirit of sobriety *or a* sound mind, *as the Apostle doth phrase it,* 2 Tim. 1.

*Nor is there any thing here to gratifie such as*

*are of a flashy, light, and trifling spirit. Here is no luxuriancy of phansy, no frothy wit, no humorous expressions, no painted or gay language, nothing that is flaunting and gawdy, none of those* Oculiferia, (*as* Seneca *speaks of the* Stoical *writings*) *with which some childish minds are greatly enamour'd to their own hurt; as silly Larks are mightily taken with some glistering pieces of glass in the fields, and at length play themselves into the Fowlers net. Here is no such stuff as is apt to take those who in truth are but* παιδια ἢ φρένων children in Understanding, *and unable to discern what is most serious and substantial, and makes for the noblest accomplishment of their minds, and for their spiritual and eternal welfare. A serious and wise Christian cannot but disregard* the weakness *of these* strong lines *as they call them, he cannot but nauseat such kind of Theological Discourses (come they either from the Press or from the Pulpit) which, however they may please the itching ears & tickle the phansies of such as are unacquainted with better things, yet (contrary to what followed upon the preaching of the Apostles) never penetrate the heart, nor awaken men to such affectionate inquiries,* Men and Brethren what shall we do? *and again,* What must we do to be saved?

*Nor is there any thing here to gratifie those that are all for nice subtilties and distinctions, thin*

*thin and jejune Theories, that cannot skill of any thing but what comes to them in their Mode of* Ob. *and* Sol. *with the rest of the Scholastick accoutrements, although what is otherwise expresst may be very rational, solid, important and clear to those that are free-spirited and ingenuous. These are they that have learnt* disputare, non vivere, *and are more for that kind of* Knowledg *which* puffeth up, *than for* Charity *and divine Love which would* edify. *They are not for* provoking *and exciting one another* to Love and good works, *but rather for provoking to wrath, envy and strife; and accordingly in their converse with others they are ready to spoil any spiritual conference about the most clear, concerning, Practical Truths, by starting some unnecessary doubts and controversies, and thereby changing it to a quarrelsome, impetuous, and wholly unspiritual debate about some speculative matters both uncertain & unnecessary, and not pertaining* to life & godliness: *And now they reign, now they are happy: and being desirous of vain-glory and dominion, are very forward to dogmatize and most magisterially to impose their conceits upon all others, affecting and endeavoring by their* darkning counsel with words, *by their clogging easy and trivial notions with multiplicity of distinctions which have a shew of wisdom, to be admired for the only acute and*

*knowing men, and being admired for such by the Many who look only upon the outsides of things,* they have their reward.

*But though there be nothing in this Treatise to humour those that are under the power of these* Vanities, *yet there is that which is infinitely better than all these, and will be accordingly valued by* the good and honest heart; *& that is* the simplicity of the Knowledg and Life of Christ, *for the excellency of which if all those other things be accounted so much as dross and dung, they are abundantly honored.*

*Hitherto we have spoken of the excellent* Usefulness *of this Treatise, and of the* Qualifications *required in him that would* profitably read *this or any other Spiritual Treatise, and of the necessity of* Obedience, *in order to the attainment of an Encrease in divine knowledg. And indeed again and again is the Christian Reader to be admonished to seek after the best knowledg of divine things in the way of* Obedience *and* Experience, *carefully to observe the power of divine Truths working and prevailing within him, & to continue his endeavoring after a real conformity to the life of Christ, as becomes him to do that would* plene & sapide verba Christi intelligere, *attain to a more full, savoury & sensible knowledg of Christ, according to our Author's direction in this Treatise.*

Now

*Now what we have ſpoken herein, may be clearly confirmed from the Example of our Author himſelf, who was a ſerious and diligent Obſerver of the Kingdom of God within him, and ſpeaks of the inward things of Religion, as one that did carefully mind the power and Energy of Truth in his own ſoul.*

*Agreeably in this Treatiſe doth he frequently invite men to the exerciſe of* Meditation, *that withdrawing themſelves often from the noiſes and tumults of the World, they might in ſweet and ſtill retirements be more free to converſe with God and with themſelves. The good and advantages which come to a Chriſtian by theſe introverſions into himſelf, and drawings near to God (as alſo the evil and diſadvantages which come to a man by his being eagerly engaged in the world, and by powring out his whole ſelf to theſe outward things) he mentions in more than a few places of this Book. I ſhall inſtance in ſome few of them, more particularly in ſuch as have ſome relation to the Author.*

*The ſelf-recollecting Chriſtian, one ſeaſonably retired, (ſo as not to neglect any incumbent duty) grows more in all wiſdom and ſpiritual underſtanding; hath fuller and clearer apprehenſions of divine things, and ſpeaks of them with more authority and power, and with more facility, freedom and readineſs. This was verified*

*in*

*in our Author, to whom it was not ſtrange to ſpeak of ſpiritual and heavenly things, and that with the greateſt delight and complacence; and therefore if he were deſired at any time by ſome honeſt-hearted Chriſtians to preach, he was ready after a little retirement to return to them, and to ſatisfie their ſpiritual thirſt; for he had a living fountain within him, and ſpake from an inward ground, and the things he ſpake, were not ſtrange but familiar to him, and known by experience: ſo that it was not what he had only ſeen with his eyes in the writings of others, or what he had heard with his ears from the diſcourſes of others, but what he had* taſted & felt within himſelf, *and what he knew inwardly, he declared to them. And this kind of preaching or ſpeaking about divine things, is certainly the beſt, and moſt for the honor of Chriſt, the good of ſouls, and the triumph of holy Angels who infinitely rejoyce at the converſion of a ſinner, when forſaking the vanities and evils of this world (for the whole world lieth in wickedneſs) and breaking off from all thoſe beloved ſins which hitherto had wholly poſſeſt him, and putting off as to his former converſation the old man; he is renewed in the ſpirit of his mind, and puts on that new man which is created after God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, not living the reſt of his time in the fleſh, to the luſts of men,*

*but*

*but to the will of God. When a poor ſinner thus comes to himſelf and to God, and therein minds his own good, and does well to his Soul which before he had wrong'd; it is matter of joy and triumph to the good Angels, as of envy and trouble to the Devil and his Angels.*

*The Chriſtian that communes with God and his own heart, grows as in knowledg, ſo in Grace and Holineſs, and indeed it will be very hard without this holy retiredneſs to keep up Religion in power and vigor. And as he partakes more of holineſs, ſo doth he partake more of the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs, and finds more reſt unto his ſoul, than thoſe that are ſwallowed up either in the cares or in the pleaſures of this world; which is the life and condition of the ſelf-ſeeking worldlings, the crafty Politicians, the Lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God, the ambitious and covetous, who as they are out of the way of true knowledg, & minding earthly things are not the moſt fit diſcerners of things heavenly and divine, ſo alſo they are out of the way of true peace and reſt: for that they may enjoy what they inordinately deſire, they are anxious and cumber themſelves about many things, riſe up early and ſit up late, and pierce themſelves through with many cares; and when they enjoy it, that which was in the mouth ſweet as honey, becomes bitter in the belly, as it is ſaid of the*

*Book,*

*Book*, Revelat. 10. *The truth of all this our Author was well assured of, as appeared by that noted saying of his*, In omnibus requiem quæsivi, & nusquam inveni, nisi in **hoecrkens ende voecrkens**, *that is, as some have endeavored to imitate the Dutch*, in angellis & libellis; *intimating hereby, that in all those outward things which the men of this world so greedily long & earnestly contend for, he never found so pure, so clear a contentment, so lasting satisfaction, such secure and full rest, as in retired converse with God and himself, as in meditation, in reading of books, especially that Book of books, the Holy Scripture: in the fair transcribing of which for the good of others, he spent not a little time, nor a little of his strength through his day and night labors, which yet God did mercifully repair and preserve unto a good old age: for he was in the Ninety second year of his age, when he dyed, and* his eye was not dimm, *as it is said of* Moses; *for all his night-labors either in transcribing the Bible, or writing out his own meditations, his eye-sight failed him not, so that even to the last he never used spectacles, but continued to be of a sharp and strong sight. This excellent faculty in writing he gained by his great industry & continued practise, when he was young and lived at* Daventry, *in the house of* Florentius *who was a burning and shining light, and his Family*

*mily was a School of Piety, a nursery of Religion to several young men that lived there in great plainness and singleness of heart, and for their common maintenance (besides other labors) did transcribe good Books. This is the Character our Author gives of that place of his Education, where he acquir'd his rare faculty of writing, which (more especially at that time when Printing was either not known, or but in its very infancy) was an excellent Quality, and could not be better employ'd than about the fair copyings out of the Bible, the best of Books, which indeed was both his* Counseller *and his* Delights, his deareſt delights, *to use his own words;* ---Scripturæ----chariſſimæ meæ deliciæ ſunt, & erunt, donec dies æternitatis illuceſcat, & umbra mortalitatis inclinetur.

*To conclude this Argument, the Christian that can dwell at home and be recollected, is more frequently visited by God, and admitted to more inward converse with him. This was eminently exemplifyed in our Author, who many times as he was discoursing amongst his brethren and companions of spiritual & heavenly things (of which he always spake with most pleasure and self-content, as also with the greatest fluency and readiness) would have an inward powerful sense of God's approaching to him and speaking to his heart;* So *that he was enforced modestly to take*

*leave of the company, and excuſe himſelf for his abrupt going away, under the notion of a friends coming to ſpeak with him: And thus being parted from them, he would retire into his cloſet, that he might* vacare Deo, *be free to converſe with God, that he might pour out his inward ſelf before God, and receive the ſweet influences of heaven, the out-flowings of the Divine wiſdom and goodneſs, Gods light and love, into his Soul; For the more a religious Soul empties it ſelf before God in acts of Humility and Love, the more ſhall it be filled with the fulneſs of God.*

*Some intimations and* ſpecimina *of this his practiſe, and the good of it, the Reader may more plainly obſerve in the third book of this Treatiſe, where the diſcourſe is carried on in the form and way of a divinely-affectionate Entercourſe between Chriſt and a recollected Chriſtian. And in this Book eſpecially doth the Author repreſent a Chriſtian according to the ſeveral tempers and ſtates he may be in, (and in all which he himſelf ſeems to have been) ſometimes in ſpiritual conflicts, & ſometimes in triumphs; ſometimes under great tentations and trials, in a ſtate of fear and diſcomfort and anxiety,* propter ariditatem mentis *as he phraſeth it, becauſe of the drineſs of his mind and affections, & becauſe of the want of thoſe more ſenſible feelings of divine ſweetneſs and influence; and o-*

*ther*

*ther times victorious, more than Conquerour, free and enlarged, bedew'd and overflow'd with holy joys and delights. Sometimes dark and cold, then enlightned and inflamed. Sometimes in a low and tottering condition, then raiſed up and eſtabliſhed; yet always and in all conditions, and under all theſe ſpiritual viciſſitudes, he repreſents a Chriſtian as obliged to be humble and reſigned, always poor in ſpirit, ſelf-abaſing, ſenſible of the neceſſity of divine aſſiſtance, thankfully acknowledging the ſupplies of grace, and purged from all pride, arrogancy, and ſelf-exalting as to any pretenſion and conceit of merit in himſelf; which word* meritum *or* mereri *though ſometimes it is uſed by the Author, as of old by the ancient Fathers, yet it is uſed in a ſenſe far diſtant from ſelf-glorying. For the clearing of theſe particulars many paſſages (if need were) might be obſerved out of this Third book, as alſo out of the firſt and ſecond; of which three books, what hath been hitherto ſpoken in reference to this Treatiſe, is properly to be underſtood. For as for the Fourth, all in it (except ſome few paſſages) relates to the Euchariſt, and therefore is of a more particular and reſtrained concernment, and treats of an Argument more diſtant from what is intimated by the Title of this Treatiſe, viz.* The Imitation *or* Following of Chriſt.

*The Remainder of this Preface is to give*

*ſome account of the* Engliſh *Tranſlations, and this with all convenient brevity.*

*Such was the conſtantly acknowledged worth of this Treatiſe, that it has been very often done into* Engliſh. *To omit what is leſs remarkable, it ſhould not be forgot, that it was betimes tranſlated out of the* French *Edition into* Engliſh, *and by no meaner a Perſonage than the Lady* Margaret, *Counteſs of* Richmond *and* Derby, *mother of King* Henry *the 7. a Lady of great Devotion & Charity*, adorned with good works (*which ornament St.* Paul *repreſents as that which is infinitely the beſt, and ſuch as* becomes womens profeſſing godlineſs) *and withal in S.* Peters *phraſe*, clothed with humility, *as* Eraſmus *obſerves of her in his Epiſtles; and in both theſe* [Humility *and* Charity] *a* Follower *of Chriſt who was* meek and lowly in heart, *and who* went about doing good. *And of her tranſcribing and copying out of his Example in* Beneficence *there are many noble inſtances in ſeveral places, particularly in* Cambridge, *where ſhe founded firſt* Chriſts College, *and not being weary in well doing, a little afterwards founded S.* Johns, *as alſo a Theological Lecture in that, and in the other Univerſity, beſides other expreſſions of her* Beneficence *there, & in other places; a* Beneficence *it was of an enlarged nature, ſuch as reſpected*

not

*not the outward man, but also the inward, the better part, in providing for the Religious and ingenuous education of men, and the accomplishing of them for publick service.*

*In Queen* Elizabeth's *reign it was translated into* English *and more than once published by Mr.* Rogers *who dedicated it to the then Lord Chancellor* Bromley. *Concerning which* Translation *it may be said, (which yet is not said with a design to disvalue the laudable part of his great pains and labor in that performance) that in very many places it is rather a short Paraphrase than a Translation, nor is it in them the* Translation *of* Thomas of Kempis *his Latin, but of* Castellio's *Latin.*

*As for the Author's own* Latin, *it is significantly expressive of his sense, and is not without it's life and quickness; yet is it very homely and plain, as were most especially of the Religious writings in that age; the* Latin *style not being then so polish't and restored to its purity and splendor as it was afterwards by the great industry of some learned men, particularly by the stupendious diligence and unwearied labors of the incomparable* Erasmus, *whom I the rather mention, because as he was a great Restorer of Ingenuous Learning, so also was he a great Advancer of Practical Christianity, there being an excellent relish of the most serious Piety all along*

*in*

*in his Practical writings, and (that I may pretermit his* Methodus veræ Theologiæ, *his* Paraphraſes *upon the New Teſtament admirable for their clearneſs and ſpirituality, and his other Practical Diſcourſes) particularly in his* Enchiridion Militis Chriſtiani, *a Book of the like Complexion and Spirit with this of our Author's: And that even his* Pleaſantneſs *in ſome of his Diſcourſes was deſigned by him to ſerve the intereſt of what is truly ſerious, may eaſily appear to thoſe that are not men of prejudiced or contracted ſpirits. But to return, the Author's* Latin *being very homely and unpoliſht, and therefore the more ſubject to be neglected by ſome, who if they could be allured to the minding of the Authors ſenſe, might receive much ſpiritual good; upon this conſideration* Caſtellio *was moved to undertake the labor of putting the Author's ſenſe into other* Latin, *hoping thereby to win men to the reading of this Book, which for the excellent ſpirit of Piety contained therein, was very dear and high in his eſteem: this his deſign is beſt expreſt by himſelf in his Preface to his Tranſlation,* Hunc ego libellum, quia pietatis plenus, non mihi ſolum, ſed & aliis piis multis viſus eſt, putavi de Latino in Latinum, hoc eſt, de agreſtiore ſermone in paulo mundiorem, ſed tamen ſimplicem, eſſe convertendum: *and a little afterwards,* Quod

Latinio-

Latiniorem feci, cauſam habui hanc, quod multi Latiniora libentius legunt: & ego homines ad piorum librorum lectionem omni licita ratione alliciendos eſſe cenſeo.

*Of latter years the* Engliſh *Editions have been more exact and perfect: thoſe in* London *ſeem to have been according to the prints at* Paris, *except ſome ſhort differences in a few places in the Three books, and the leaving out of ſome paſſages in the Fourth book, (and one paſſage in the firſt) which related to ſome cuſtoms and orders, or to ſome external rites in the* Roman *adminiſtration of the Euchariſt. Theſe as they are omitted in the late* London *Editions, ſo alſo in this. And if we compare the* Pariſian *Editions with the* Latin, *there will be found ſome Omiſſions, not to mention ſome words which needed not to have been added, beſides the interpretations of ſome phraſes which might have been leſs imperfect: which we chooſe rather to cover, than now particularly to remember.*

*Not to ſpeak much of this preſent Edition (which would be but a poor vain glorioufneſs) the Reader is deſired to mind theſe few things.*

*That it was deſired by ſome that this tranſlation ſhould be brought to a nearer Conformity to the Authors* Latin, *than any of the former, and this was deſired for the ſake of thoſe who (though of good accompliſhments, yet) have not had the*

*oppor-*

*opportunities or advantages of being acquainted with any other than their native language.*

*That accordingly it hath been endeavoured generally to keep as close to the* Latin, *as might be without clouding or perplexing the sense; so that if some words have either now been added, or are continued as being found in the former Versions, for the necessary clearing of the sense; they are for the most part included in these two crotchets* [ ], *which in two or three places are omitted, as they are twice or thrice redundant in the Print.*

*That this Endeavor of bringing this Edition nearer to the simplicity of the Authors sense and notion in the* Latin, *and withal of correcting such passages in former Editions as did not only not come near to the words of the Author, but were also too much at a distance from his sense; I say, that such an endeavour as this, might the better succeed; several* Latin *Editions have been consulted. Those that we met with, were not so ancient as we wisht and endeavoured for; yet in them we observed some (though not very many) differences, and in such places we followed that sense which was most agreeable to the neighbouring words. That there were in the written Copies more than a few mistakes and interpolations,* Labyrinthus errorum (*that's their word,*) *is told us by those who had the opportunity*

tunity of viewing and collating some of the Manuscripts, and withal mention their pains in endeavouring a more correct Edition of the Authors works. And as the Latin Editions, so were also several English Translations sometimes compared, the best of which were those of a later date; yet in them it was easie to observe some Omissions, and some unnecessary Additions, besides in some places too great an estrangedness from not only the Words, but Sense of the Author: the emendation of which things was in part endeavoured in the last English Edition 1654. but, in regard some part of the Book was printed before that assay, and the Press made hast to finish the rest, nor was there then the opportunity of consulting so many Editions, &c. it could not then be carried on so far as it is in this present Edition; for the bettering of which it was thought fit to bring more or less of the English in every page of the former Editions to a nearer conformity to the Authors words or sense. In some few places where the words were dubious, and where it was uncertain whether they were to be taken in a narrower or in a larger sense, care hath been taken to express them in the more comprehensive sense: And it hath been observed by some Publishers of this Book, that there are some words, which though now understood in a more limited and determin'd

*ſenſe, were uſed by the Author in a more laxe and general Notion.*

*That it is hoped that the* Engliſh *in this Edition (plain and without pomp, as is the Author's* Latin) *is tolerably ſmooth, facile & perſpicuous, and not more rugged or ungrateful than in the Former, notwithſtanding this ſtricter regard to the words of the Author, as it was by ſome much deſired; the complying with whoſe deſire render'd this undertaking far more troubleſome by reaſon of here & there ſome odd pieces of* Latin, *and by reaſon of the Authors ſtyle generally very cloſe and conciſe; how troubleſome none can ſo well judge as thoſe that ſhall travel in the like endeavor. Otherwiſe it would have been a much eaſier (and to ſome perhaps a more plauſible) buſineſs to have paraphras'd upon the Author, or with others to have taken the liberty to flouriſh or deſcant upon the ſenſe.*

*But the more any Reader hath of a ſeriouſly religious Spirit in him, the leſs curious and ſollicitous will be about either the* Engliſh *or* Latin; *for when his Mind comes to be* deeply immerſt *in the* ſpirituality *of the* inward ſenſe, *when he ſhall once come to converſe with the very* ſoul *of all that Practical Truth contained in this Treatiſe; he cannot think it* curæ-pretium *worth the while to be a nice Obſerver of the* Body *and outward dreſs of the ſtyle & language.*

guage. *Such as one knows how to prize this rich* Treasure, *though brought in an* earthen vessel; *nor will he disesteem the precious* Pearl *for the meanness of the shell. To be able to discern and value what is weighty, substantial, & of good use and importance,* δοκιμάζειν τὰ διαφέροντα, *to prove and to approve the things that are more excellent, is the property and priviledg of a free and large mind, is an Argument of a clear & sincere Judgment; But to be anxious & keep ado about Words and Phansies, or such and such Forms of expressions, is the quality of a* childish *and* narrow *spirit, a* weak *and* little *mind. Some there be which are so straitned by a principle of* Self-love *in them, and by their fond regard to their own words and conceits, their* Idola specus, *their particular* Mode *and way; that the same Truth, which would please their Phansie (for it goes, no deeper) if appearing in their own Forme of Words, is presently disregarded if it come to them in another form and dress.*

*These were the principal* Advertisements *which it was thought convenient to mind the Reader of, who is desired to take them along with him in the perusal of this Treatise.*

*Not to enlarge any further on this Argument, I shall only add this, That I doubt not but some there are, who, being* rich in spirit, *full of self-love, and greater in their own eyes than they are*

*in others, will think too undervaluingly of this Treatise, and being of contracted spirits, will be prejudiced against it, they not valuing truth for it self and wheresoever they find it, but only as it is conveyed to them by such whose* persons they have in admiration because of advantage. *But I am not at all sollicitous concerning the men of this spirit which every where swarm in Christendom; what hath been already spoken, may serve to check their Pharisaical temper. I know there is in this Book both* Milk *and* strong meat: *yet even those Truths that seem least in their eye, are no such despicable things; but their lives shew that they have great need to be more and more awaken'd into the serious apprehension & observance of them. That which doth not a little disturb them (which yet they are loth to profess) is plainly this, that there are such Practical Truths urged here, as are contrary to their corrupt principles and interests, such as oblige them to that which is grievous to flesh and blood, & contrary to their love of themselves and the world: such as would raise them to an inward & living righteousness far exceeding that specious and dead righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees: and if these Truths be so common as they pretend, & easie to be understood in a speculative way, yet they are hard to be practised by them, and that's the true reason why they quarrel with them, and*

take

*take it very ill that their impotency and ſhortneſs ſhould thus be diſcovered and reproved.*

*The ſame Men will alſo be very apt to think and ſpeak ſlightly of the labor and care in this Edition, or any ſuch like undertaking, as if it were a buſineſs too low and ſervile, and will be ready to ſay with that miſerable diſciple,* εἰς τί ἡ ἀπώλεια αὕτη; wherefore is this waſte? *as if to be thus employ'd, were to loſe* oleum & operam, *and that herein a man did too much neglect and leſſen himſelf: this is their opinion and cenſure. But neither am I ſollicitous about this.* To me it is a very ſmall thing to be judged of Mans judgment, *eſpecially of thoſe who are blinded by ſelf-love, pride and prejudice, and are little acquainted with the* wiſdom *which is* peaceable, gentle, eaſie to be entreated, full of mercy & good fruits; *ſuch who by being more talkative and dogmatical, by a rude eagerneſs and* doting about queſtions and ſtrifes of words *may make a great ſhow and appearance of knowledg, yet of ſuch it is ſaid, that they are* proud, knowing nothing, deſtitute of the Truth, *ſpeaking evil of the things they know not. Theſe men are all for* ſitting at Chriſts right & left hand in his Kingdom, *for eaſe and privileges; and think it much to* humble *themſelves* (*as our Lord did*) *to* the forme of a ſervant *for the good of others; to make themſelves* ſervants unto all (*as S.* Paul *did*)

*did*)that they may gain the more : *they are averse from the labors of Religion in bearing the Yoke of Christ, striving against the lusts that war in their members, exercising themselves to godliness, abounding more & more in the work of the Lord : nay they grudg God any service, except such wherein they may serve themselves. But know ye vain glorious and blind Pharisees, understand ye brutish among the People, that the yoke of Christ is a sweet, gracious & gainful yoke, that there is no victory so glorious as that which is over a mans self, that godliness is profitable unto all things, and is great gain, so that it is not in vain to serve the Lord ; nor is there any service to be call'd mean and low which is done for God ; whatsoever is tinctur'd with true respects to a spiritual good, becomes rich and precious : to be but a* Gibeonite, *a drawer of water & hewer of wood, so it be for the house of God; to be a doorkeeper, to sit at the threshold,* abjectus esse, παραπιπτεῖσθαι, (*such several rendrings there are of the* Heb. הִמְתוֹפֵף Psal. 84.) *to have but a meaner employment, or a lower place in the house of God, is a great grace and favor.*

*But I fear I may seem too unkind to the Reader, in keeping him by so long a Preface from better things, I mean that* Treasure *of spiritual wisdom* hid *in the following Treatise. Yet I am the less troubled for the length of it, when I consider*

*ſider that there is nothing in it to gratifie any one Sect or party, and that there are ſome things intimated therein, which are not unconcerning and impertinent, but very neceſſary for thoſe of different ways and perſwaſions ſeriouſly to think on: And that theſe might be the more fully and with more advantage commended to them, I have taken the liberty thus far to enlarge the Preface.*

*And now what remains after all this labor but to add humble and hearty deſires to the God of all grace, the Father of lights, that he would take away all vails and remove all prejudices from the minds and hearts of the Readers; that he would prepare* good and honeſt hearts *for the receiving of thoſe Truths which ſo mainly concern* Life *and* Godlineſs: *that it may pleaſe him ſo to proſper what is here written of the true* Imitation of Chriſt, *as that they that read, may be formed into the likeneſs of Chriſt and follow his ſteps; that being in the world as He was in the world, and being changed into his image from glory to glory, They may at laſt be with him where he is, and behold the glory which God hath given him, and ſo for ever be with the Lord.*

Luke 9. 23.

*IF any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross daily, and follow me.*

John 14. 6.

*I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.*

Philip. 2. 5.

*Let the same mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus.*

1 Peter 2. 21.

*Leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.*

1 John 2. 6.

*He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk; even as he walked.*

Chap. 3. 7.

*Little Children, let no man deceive you; He that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous.*

Chap. 4. 17.

*Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness at the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.*

Revel. 14. 4.

*These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*

2 Cor. 3. 18.

*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

Rom. 13. 14.

*Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to* fulfil *the lusts* thereof.

Ephes. 4. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

*But ye have not so learned Christ: If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus. That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts: And be renewed in the spirit of your mind: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness.*

---

*S. Bernard.*

Christum sequendo citiùs apprehendes quàm legendo.

*S. Augustine.*

Summa religionis Christianæ est imitari eum quem colis.

THE

# The Contents of the Chapters.

## The First Book.

## CHAP. I.


*OF the Imitation of Christ and contempt of all worldly vanities.* Pag. 1
*Of the humble conceit of our selves.* 3
*Of the doctrine of Truth.* 6
*Of wisdom and providence in our actions.* 10
*Of the reading of holy Scriptures.* 11
*Of inordinate affections.* 12
*Of flying vain hope and pride.* 13
*That too much familiarity is to be shunned.* 15
*Of obedience and subjection.* 16
*Of avoiding superfluity in words.* 17
*Of the obtaining of peace, and zealous desire of profiting in grace.* 19
*Of the profit of adversity.* 22
*Of resisting temptations.* 23
*Of avoiding rash judgment.* 27
*Of works done of Charity.* 29
*Of bearing with the defects of others.* 30
*Of a retired life.* 32
*Of the examples of the holy Fathers.* 34
*Of the exercise of a good and religious person.* 37
*Of the love of solitude and silence.* 41


*Of*

*Of compunction of heart.* 46
*Of the consideration of humane misery.* 49
*Of the meditation of death.* 54
*Of judgement, and the punishment of Sins.* 58
*Of the zealous amendment of our whole life.* 63

## The Second Book

### CHAP. I

*OF the inward life.* 70
*Of humble submission.* 75
*Of a good and peaceable Man.* 76
*Of a pure mind, and upright intention.* 78
*Of the consideration of ones self.* 80
*Of the joy of a good conscience.* 82
*Of the love of Jesus above all things.* 84
*Of familiar conversation with Jesus.* 86
*Of the want of all comfort.* 89
*Of thankfulness for the grace of God.* 93
*How few the lovers of the Cross of Christ are.* 97
*Of the high way of the holy Cross.* 99

## The Third Book.

### CHAP. I.

*OF the inward speech of Christ unto a faithful soul.* 108

*That truth ſpeaketh inwardly without noiſe of words.* 110
*That the words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.* 112
*That we ought to live in truth, and humility before God.* 116
*Of the wonderful effect of divine love.* 119
*Of the proof of a true Lover.* 123
*That grace is to be hid under the veil of humility.* 126
*Of a mean conceit of our ſelves in the ſight of God.* 130
*That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the laſt end.* 132
*That the world being deſpiſed, it is a ſweet thing to ſerve God,* 133
*That the deſires of our heart are to be examined and moderated.* 137
*Of Patience, and of ſtriving againſt concupiſcence.* 139
*Of the humble obedience of a ſubject, according to the example of Chriſt.* 142
*Of the ſecret judgment of God to be conſidered, leſt we be exalted in our good deeds.* 144
*How we are to ſtand affected, and what we are to ſay, in every thing which we deſire.* 146

That

*That true comfort is to be ſought in God alone.* 149
*That all our care is to be placed in God.* 150
*That temporal miſeries, after the example of Chriſt, muſt be born patiently.* 152
*Of ſuffering of injuries; and who is proved to be truly patient.* 154
*Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities; and of the miſeries of this life.* 157
*That we are to reſt in God, above all his gifts and benefits.* 160
*Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God.* 164
*Of four things that bring much peace.* 167
*Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.* 170
*Wherein the firm peace of the heart, and true ſpiritual profiting conſiſteth.* 172
*Of the excellency of a free mind, which humble Prayer ſooner gaineth than Reading.* 174
*That private love moſt hindreth from the chiefeſt Good.* 176
*Againſt the tongues of ſlanderers.* 179
*How we ought to call upon God, and bleſs him when tribulation draweth near.* 180
*Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.* 182

*Of*

*Of the contempt of all creatures, to find out the Creator.* 186
*Of denial of our ſelves, and forſaking all inordinate deſires.* 189
*Of inconſtancy of heart, and of directing our final intentions unto God.* 191
*That God is ſweet, above all things, and in all things, to him that loveth.* 193
*That there is no ſecurity from temptation in this life.* 195
*Againſt the vain judgments of Men.* 197
*Of a full and pure reſignation of our ſelves, for the obtaining freedom of heart.* 199
*Of good government in outward things, and of recourſe to God in dangers.* 202
*That a Man be not over earneſt in his affairs.* 204
*That a Man hath no good of himſelf, nor any thing whereof he can glory.* 205
*Of the contempt of all temporal honors.* 208
*That our peace is not to be placed in Men.* 209
*Againſt vain and ſecular knowledg.* 211
*Of not drawing outward things to our ſelves.* 213
*That credit is not to be given to all Men; and how prone Man is to offend in words.* 214
*Of putting our truſt in God, when evil words ariſe.* 218

*That all grievous things are to be endured for life everlasting.* 221
*Of the everlasting day, and shortness of this life.* 224
*Of the desire of everlasting life, and how great rewards are promised to those that fight valiantly.* 228
*How a disconsolate person ought to offer himself into the Hands of God.* 233
*That a Man ought to imploy himself in works of Humility, when strength is wanting for higher imployments.* 238
*That a Man ought to esteem himself not worthy of comfort, but rather to deserve stripes.* 239
*That the grace of God doth not joyn it self with those that savor of Earthly things.* 242
*Of the different motions of Nature, and Grace.* 244
*Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of divine Grace.* 250
*That we ought to deny our selves, and imitate Christ by the Cross.* 254
*That a Man be not too much dejected when he falleth into some defects.* 257
*Of not searching into high matters, and into the secret judgments of God* 259
*That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in God alone.* 265

The Contents.

## The Fourth Book.

### CHAP. I.


*With how great reverence Christ ought to be received.* 270

*That the great goodness and love of God is exhibited to Man in this Sacrament.* 277

*That it is profitable to communicate often.* 281

*That many benefits are bestowed upon them that communicate devoutly.* 284

*Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and Ministerial function,* 288

*An interrogation of the exercise before Communion.* 290

*Of the discussing of our own conscience, and purpose of amendment.* 291

*Of the oblation of Christ on the Cross and resignation of our selves.* 294

*That we ought to offer up our selves, and all that is ours unto God, and to pray for all.* 296

*That the holy communion is not lightly to be forborn.* 299

*That the body of Christ, and the holy Scriptures, are most necessary unto a faithful soul.* 304


That

*That he who is to communicate, ought to prepare himself with great diligence.* 309
*That a devout soul ought to desire with her whole heart, to be united unto Christ in the Sacrament.* 311
*Of the fervent desire of some devout persons to receive the Body of Christ.* 314
*That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and denial of our selves.* 316
*That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and crave his grace.* 319
*Of fervent love and vehement desire to receive Christ.* 321
*That Man be not a curious searcher of the Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his sense to faith.* 324

# THE FIRST BOOK.

## CHAP. I.

*Of the Imitation of Christ, and contempt of all wordly vanities.*

HE *that followeth me, walketh not in darkneſs*, ſaith the Lord. Theſe are the words of Chriſt by which we are admoniſhed, that we ought to imitate his life and manners, if we will be truly inlightned, and be delivered from all blindneſs of heart. Let therefore our chiefeſt endeavor be to meditate upon the life of Jeſus Chriſt.

2. The doctrine of Chriſt exceedeth all the doctrines of holy Men; and he that hath the Spirit, will find therein an hidden Manna. But it falleth out, that ma-

ny, who often hear the Gospel of Christ, are yet but little affected, because they are void of the Spirit of Christ. But whosoever will fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavor to conform his life wholly to *the life of* Christ.

3. What will it avail thee to dispute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be void of humility, and art thereby displeasing to the Trinity? High words surely make a Man neither holy nor just, but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God. I had rather feel compunction, than understand the definition thereof. If thou didst know the whole Bible, and the sayings of all the Philosophers by heart, what would all that profit thee without the love of God, and without grace? Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, but to love God, and to serve him only. This is the highest wisdom, by contempt of the world to tend towards the Kingdom of Heaven.

4. It is therefore vanity to seek after perishing riches, and to trust in them. It is also vanity to hunt after honors, and to climb to high degree. It is vanity to follow the desires of the flesh, and to labor for that, for which thou mayest afterwards suffer more

more grievous puniſhment. Vanity it is to wiſh to live long, and to be careleſs to live well. It is vanity to mind only this preſent life, and not to foreſee thoſe things which are to come, It is vanity to ſet thy love on that which ſpeedily paſſeth away, and not to haſten thither, where everlaſting joy is permanent.

5. Call often to mind that Proverb, *That the eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* Endeavor therefore to withdraw thy heart from the love of viſible things, and to turn thy ſelf to the inviſible. For they that follow their ſenſuality, do ſtain their own conſciences, and looſe the favor of God.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the humble conceit of our ſelves.*

ALL Men naturally deſire to know; but what availeth knowledg without the fear of God? Surely, an humble Husbandman that ſerveth God, is better than a proud Philoſopher that neglecting himſelf laboreth to underſtand the courſe of the

heavens. Who so knoweth himself well, groweth more mean in his own conceit, and delighteth not in the praises of Men. If I understood all things in the world, and were not in charity, what would that help me in the sight of God, who will judg me according to my deeds?

2. Cease from an inordinate desire of knowing, for therein is much distraction and deceit. The learned are willing to seem so to others, and to be accounted wise. There be many things, which to know doth little or nothing profit the soul; and he is very unwise, that is intent upon other things than those that may avail him for the welfare of his soul. Many words do not satisfie the soul; but a good life comforteth the mind, and a pure conscience giveth great assurance in the sight of God.

3. How much the more thou knowest, and how much the better thou understandest, so much the more grievously shalt thou therefore be judged, unless thy life be also more holy. Be not therefore extolled in thine own mind for any Art or Science *which thou knowest*, but rather let the knowledg given thee, make thee more humble

humble, and cautious. If thou thinkeſt that thou underſtandeſt and knoweſt much; know alſo that there be many things more which thou knoweſt not. Affect not to be overwiſe, but rather acknowledg thine own ignorance. Why wilt thou prefer thy ſelf before others, ſith there be many more learned and skilful in the Scripture than thou? If thou wilt know or learn any thing profitably; deſire to be unknown, and to be little eſteemed of *by Man.*

4. The higheſt and moſt profitable reading is the true knowledg and conſideration of our ſelves. It is great wiſdom and perfection to eſteem nothing of our ſelves, and to think always well and highly of others. If thou ſhouldſt ſee another openly ſin, or commit ſome hainous offence, yet oughteſt thou not to eſteem the better of thy ſelf; for thou knoweſt not how long thou ſhalt be able to remain in good eſtate. We are all frail, but thou oughteſt to eſteem none more frail than thy ſelf.

## CHAP. III.

### *Of the doctrine of truth.*

HAppy is he whom Truth by it ſelf doth teach, not by figures and words that paſs away; but as it is in its ſelf. Our own opinion and our own ſenſe do often deceive us, and it diſcerns little. What availeth it to cavil *and diſpute* about dark and hidden things; whereas for being ignorant of them we ſhall not be ſo much as reproved at the day of judgment? It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and neceſſary, and give our minds to that which is curious and hurtful: we have eyes and ſee not.

2. And what have we to do with *Genus* and *Species*, *the dry notions of Logicians?* He to whom the Eternal Word ſpeaketh, is delivered from a world of unneceſſary conceptions. From that one Word are all things, and all ſpeak that one; and this is the Beginning, which alſo ſpeaketh unto us. No Man without that *Word* underſtandeth or judgeth rightly. He to whom all things are one, he who reduceth all things

things to one, and ſeeth all things in one; may enjoy a quiet mind, and remain peaceable in God. O God, who art the Truth, make me one with thee in everlaſting charity. It is tedious to me often to read and hear many things: In thee is all that I would have and can deſire. Let all Doctors hold their peace; let all creatures be ſilent in thy ſight; Speak thou alone unto me.

3. How much the more one is united within himſelf, and becometh inwardly ſimple *and pure*, ſo much the more and higher things doth he underſtand without labor; for that he receiveth intellectual light from above. A pure, ſincere, and ſtable Spirit is not diſtracted, *though it be employed* in many works; for that, it works all to the honor of God, and inwardly being ſtill and quiet, ſeeks not it ſelf in any thing it doth. Who hinders and troubles thee more than the unmortified affections of thine own heart? A good and godly Man firſt of all diſpoſeth within himſelf thoſe things which he is outwardly to act; neither do they draw him to the deſires of an inordinate inclination, but he ordereth them according to the preſcript of right reaſon. Who hath a greater combat, than

he that laboreth to overcome himſelf? This ought to be our endeavor, to conquer our ſelves, and daily to wax ſtronger and to make a further growth in holineſs.

4. All perfection in this life hath ſome imperfection mixt with it; and no knowledg of ours is without ſome darkneſs. An humble knowledg of thy ſelf is a ſurer way to God, than a deep ſearch after learning; yet learning is not to be blamed, nor the mere knowledg of any thing whatſoever, to be diſliked, it being good in it ſelf, and ordained by God; but a good conſcience and a vertuous life is always to be preferred before it. But becauſe many endeavor rather to get knowledg, than to live well; therefore they are often deceived, and reap either none, or very ſlender profit *of their labors.*

5. O, if Men beſtowed as much labor in the rooting out of vices, and planting of vertues, as they do in moving of queſtions. Neither would there ſo much hurt be done, nor ſo great ſcandal be given in the world; nor ſo much looſeneſs be practiſed in religious Houſes. Truly, at the day of Judgment we ſhall not be examined what we have read, but what we have done; not

not how well we have ſpoken, but how religiouſly we have lived. Tell me now, where are all thoſe Doctors and Maſters, with whom thou waſt well acquainted, whilſt they lived and flouriſhed in learning? Now others poſſeſs their livings, and perhaps do ſcarce ever think of them. In their life-time they ſeemed ſomething, but now they are not ſpoken of.

6. O, how quickly doth the glory of the world paſs away! O that their life had been anſwerable to their learning! then had their ſtudy and reading been to good purpoſe. How many periſh in this world by reaſon of vain-learning, who take little care of the ſerving of God: And becauſe they rather chooſe to be great than humble, therefore they become vain in their imaginations. He is truly great that is great in charity. He is truly great, that is little in himſelf, and that maketh no account of any height of honor. He is truly wiſe, that accounteth all earthly things as dung, that he may gain Chriſt. And he is truly learned, that doeth the will of God, and forſaketh his own will.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

### *Of wiſdom and providence in our actions.*

WE muſt not give ear to every ſaying or ſuggeſtion, but ought warily and leiſurely to ponder things according to *the will of* God. But (alas) ſuch is our weakneſs that we rather often believe, and ſpeak evil of others than good. Thoſe that are perfect Men do not eaſily give credit to every thing one tells them; for they know that humane frailty is prone to evil, and very ſubject to fail in words.

2. It is great wiſdom not to be raſh in thy proceedings, nor to ſtand ſtiffely in thine own conceits; as alſo not to believe every thing which thou heareſt, nor preſently to relate again to others, what thou haſt heard or doſt believe. Conſult with him that is wiſe, and conſcientious, and ſeek to be inſtructed by a better than thy ſelf, rather than to follow thine own inventions. A good life maketh a Man wiſe according to God, and giveth him experience in many things. How much the humbler one is in himſelf, and more ſubject *and reſigned*

*reſigned* unto God; ſo much the more prudent ſhall he be in all his affairs, and enjoy greater peace and quiet of heart.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the reading of holy Scriptures.*

TRuth, not eloquence, is to be ſought for in holy Scripture. Each part of the Scripture is to be read with the ſame Spirit wherewith it was written. We ſhould rather ſearch after *our ſpiritual* profit in the Scriptures, than ſubtilty of ſpeech. We ought to read plain and devout books as willingly as high and profound. Let not the authority of the Writer offend thee, whether he be of great or ſmall learning; but let the love of pure truth draw thee to read. Search not who ſpake this or that, but mark what is ſpoken.

2. Men paſs away, but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. God ſpeaks unto us ſundry ways, without reſpect of perſons. Our own curioſity often hindreth us in reading of the Scriptures, when as we will examine and diſcuſs that which we ſhould rather paſs over without more ado. If thou deſire to reap profit, read humbly, plainly,

plainly, and faithfully; never desire the estimation of learning; Inquire willingly, and hear with silence the words of holy Men: dislike not the parables of the Elders, for they are not recounted without cause.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of inordinate affections.*

WHensoever a Man desireth any thing inordinately, he is presently disquieted in himself. The proud and covetous can never rest. The poor and humble in Spirit live together in all peace. The Man that is not yet perfectly dead to himself, is quickly tempted and overcome in small and trifling things. The weak in Spirit, and he that is yet in a manner carnal and prone to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himself altogether from earthly desires. And therefore he is often afflicted, when he goeth about to withdraw himself from them; and easily falleth into indignation, when any opposition is made against him.

2. And

2. And if he hath followed therein his appetite, he is presently disquieted with remorse of conscience; for that he yielded to his passion which profiteth him nothing to the obtaining of the peace he sought for. True quietness of heart therefore is gotten by resisting our passions, not by obeying them. There is no peace in the heart of a carnal Man, nor of him that is addicted to outward things, but in the spiritual and fervent Man.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Of flying vain hope and pride.*

HE is vain that putteth his trust in Man, or Creatures. Be not ashamed to serve others for the love of Jesus Christ; nor to be esteemed poor in this world. Presume not upon thy self, but place thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will assist thy good affection. Trust not in thine own knowledg, nor in the subtilty of any living Creature; but rather in the grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth those that are self-presuming.

2. Glory

2. Glory not in wealth if thou have it, nor in friends because potent; but in God who giveth all things, and above all desireth to give thee himself. Extol not thy self for the bigness or beauty of thy body, which is dissolved and disfigured with a little sickness. Take not pleasure in thy natural gifts, or wit, lest thereby thou displease God, to whom appertaineth all the good whatsoever thou hast by nature.

3. Esteem not thy self better than others, lest perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in Man, thou be accounted worse than they. Be not proud of wel-doing; for the judgment of God is far different from the judgment of Men, and that often offendeth him which pleaseth them. If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others, that so thou mayest conserve humility within thee. It is no prejudice unto thee to debase thy self under all Men; but it is very prejudicial to thee to prefer thy self before any one Man. The humble enjoy continual peace, but in the heart of the proud is envy, and frequent indignation.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

*That too much familiarity is to be ſhunned.*

LAy not thy heart open to every one; but treat of thy affairs with the wiſe and ſuch as fear God. Converſe not much with young people, and ſtrangers. Flatter not the rich; neither do thou appear willingly before great perſonages. Keep company with the humble and plain ones, with the devout, and vertuous; and confer with them of thoſe things that may edifie. Be not familiar with any Woman; but in general commend all good Women to God. Deſire to be familiar with God alone and his Angels, and fly the knowledg of Men.

2. We muſt have charity towards all, but familiarity *with all* is not expedient. Sometimes it falleth out, that a Perſon unknown to us, is much eſteemed of, from the good report given him by others; whoſe preſence notwithſtanding is not grateful to the eyes of the beholders. We think ſometimes to pleaſe others by our company, and we rather diſtaſte them with thoſe

thoſe bad qualities which they diſcover in us.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Of obedience and ſubjection.*

IT is a great matter to live in obedience, to be under a ſuperior, and not to be at our own diſpoſing. It is much ſafer to obey, than to govern. Many live under obedience, rather for neceſſity than for charity; ſuch are diſcontented, and do eaſily repine *and murmur*. Neither can they attain to freedom of mind, unleſs they willingly and heartily put themſelves under obedience for the love of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou ſhalt find no reſt, but in humble ſubjection under the government of a Superior. The imagination and change of places have deceived many.

2. True it is, that every one willingly doth that which agreeth with his own ſenſe *and liking*; and is apt to affect thoſe moſt that are of his own mind: But if God be amongſt us, we muſt ſometimes for peace ſake ceaſe to adhere to our own opinion.

Who

Who is ſo wiſe that he can fully know all things; Truſt not therefore to thine own opinion; but be willing to hear the judgment of others. If that which thou thinkeſt be not amiſs, and yet thou ſubmitteſt it for God, and followeſt the opinion of another, it ſhall be better for thee.

3. I have often heard, that it is ſafer to hear and take counſel, than to give it. It may alſo fall out, that each ones opinion may be good; but to refuſe to yield to others when as reaſon or cauſe requireth it, is a ſign of pride and ſtiffneſs.

## CHAP. X.

### *Of the avoiding ſuperfluity in words.*

FLy the tumultuouſneſs of the world as much as thou canſt; for the talk of worldly affairs hindreth very much, although they be recounted with ſincere intention; for we are quickly defiled, and enthralled with vanity. I could wiſh that I had oftentimes held my peace, when I have ſpoken; and that I had not been in company. Why do we ſo willingly ſpeak

and talk one with another, when notwithstanding we seldom return to silence without hurt of conscience? The cause why we so willingly talk, is for that by discoursing one with another, we seek to receive comfort one of another, and desire to ease our mind overwearied with sundry thoughts; and we very willingly talk and think of those things which we most love and desire; or of those which we feel most contrary and troublesom unto us.

2. But alas, oftentimes in vain, and to no end; for this outward comfort is the cause of no small loss of inward and divine consolation. Therefore we must watch and pray, lest our time pass away idlely. If it be lawful and expedient for thee to speak, speak those things that may edifie. An evil custom and neglect of our own good doth give too much liberty to inconsiderate speech: Yet religious discourses of spiritual things do greatly further our spiritual growth, especially where persons of one mind and spirit be gathered together in God.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

### *Of the obtaining of peace, and zealous desire of profit in grace.*

WE might enjoy much peace, if we would not busie our selves with the words and deeds of other Men, which appertain nothing to our charge. How can he live long in peace, that thrusteth himself into the cares of others, that seeks occasions abroad, that little or seldom recollecteth himself within his own breast? Blessed are the single-hearted; for they shall injoy much peace.

2. What is the reason, why some of the Saints were so perfect and contemplative? Because they labored to mortifie themselves wholly to all earthly desires; and therefore they could with their whole heart give themselves to God, and be free for holy retirement. We are too much led by our passions, and too solicitous for transitory things. We also seldom overcome any one vice perfectly, and are not inflamed with a fervent desire to grow better every day; and therefore we remain cold and scarce warm in Religion.

3. If we were perfectly dead unto our selves, and not entangled within our own breasts; then should we tast divine things, and have some acquaintance with heavenly enjoyments. The greatest and indeed the whole impediment is, for that we are not disentangled from our passions and lusts, neither do we endeavor to enter into that path of perfection, which the Saints have walked before us; and when any small adversity befalleth us, we are too quickly dejected, and turn our selves to humane comforts.

4. If we would endeavor like Men of courage to stand in the battel; surely we should feel the favorable assistance of God from Heaven. For he who giveth us occasion to fight, to the end we may get the victory, is ready to succor those that fight *manfully*, and do trust in his grace. If we esteem our progress in religious life to consist only in some exterior observances, our devotion will quickly be at an end. But let us lay the Axe to the root, that being freed from passions, we may find rest to our souls.

5. If every year we would root out one vice, we should sooner become perfect Men. But now oftentimes we perceive it goes contrary,

contrary, and that we were better and purer at the beginning of our converſion, than after many years of our profeſſion. Our fervor and profiting ſhould increaſe daily; but now it is accounted a great matter, if one can retain but ſome part of his firſt zeal. If we would but a little force our ſelves at the beginning, then ſhould we be able to perform all things afterwards with eaſe and delight.

*6.* It is a hard matter to leave that to which we are accuſtomed, but harder to go againſt our own wills. But if thou doſt not overcome little and eaſie things, how wilt thou overcome harder things? Reſiſt thy inclinatiou in the very beginning, and unlearn evil cuſtomes, leſt perhaps by little and little they draw thee to greater difficulty. O, if thou didſt but conſider how much inward peace unto thy ſelf, and joy unto others thou ſhouldſt procure by demeaning thy ſelf well, I ſuppoſe thou wouldſt be more careful of thy ſpiritual profiting.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Of the profit of adverſity.*

IT is good that we have ſometimes ſome troubles and croſſes; for they often make a Man enter into himſelf, and conſider that he is here in baniſhment, and ought not to place his truſt in any worldly thing. It is good that we be ſometimes contradicted; and that there be an evil or a leſſening conceit had of us; and this, although we do and intend well. Theſe things help often to the attaining of humility, and defend us from vain glory; for then we chiefly ſeek God for our inward witneſs, when outwardly we be contemned by Men, and when there is no credit given unto us.

2. And therefore a Man ſhould ſettle himſelf ſo fully in God, that he need not to ſeek many comforts of Men. When a good Man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled with evil thoughts; then he underſtandeth better the great need he hath of God, without whom he perceiveth he can do nothing that is good. Then alſo he ſorrow-

eth

eth, lamenteth, and prayeth by reaſon of the miſeries he ſuffereth. Then he is weary of living longer, and wiſheth that death would come, that he might be diſſolved and be with Chriſt. Then alſo he well perceiveth, that perfect ſecurity and full peace cannot be had in this world.

## CHAP. XIII.

### *Of reſiſting temptations.*

SO long as we live in this world we cannot be without tribulation and temptation; for as it is written in *Job*, The life of Man is a warfare upon earth. Every one therefore ought to be careful about his temptations, and to watch in prayer, leſt the Devil find an advantage to deceive him; who never ſleepeth, but goeth about ſeeking whom he may devour. No Man is ſo perfect and holy, but hath ſometimes temptations; and we cannot be altogether without them.

2. Temptations are often profitable to Men, though they be troubleſome and grievous; for in them Man is humbled,

purged, and instructed. All the Saints have passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations; and they that could not bear temptations, became reprobate, and fell away. There is no order so holy, nor place so secret, where there be not temptations, or adversities.

3. There is no Man that is altogether free from temptations whilst he liveth on earth; for in our selves is the root thereof, being born with inclination to evil. When one temptation or tribulation goeth away, another cometh, and we shall ever have something to suffer, because we are fallen from the state of our felicity. Many seek to flie temptations, and do fall more grievously into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome, but by patience and true humility we become stronger than all our enemies.

4. He that only avoideth them outwardly, and doth not pluck them up by the roots, shall profit little; yea temptations will the sooner return unto him, and he shall feel himself in a worse case than before. By little and little, and by patience with longanimity (through Gods help) thou shalt more easily overcome, than with violence

violence and thine own importunity. Often take counsel in temptations, and deal not roughly with him that is tempted; but give him comfort as thou wouldst wish to be done to thy self.

5. The beginning of all evil temptations is inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a Ship without a stern is tossed to and fro with the waves; so the Man that is negligent, and leaveth his purpose is many ways tempted. Fire trieth Iron, and temptation a just Man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations do shew us what we are. We must be watchful, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the door of our hearts, but be resisted without the gate at his first knock. Wherefore one said, *Obsta principiis*, &c. Withstand the beginnings, for an after-remedy comes often too late. First there cometh to the mind a bare cogitation of evil, then a strong imagination thereof, afterward delight and an evil motion, and then consent; and so by little and little our wicked enemy getteth entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginning. And how much

much the longer one is negligent in resisting, he becomes daily so much the weaker in himself, and the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some suffer greatest temptations in the beginning of their conversion; others in the latter end; others again are much troubled almost through the whole time of their life. Some are but easily tempted according to the wisdom and equity of the divine appointment, which weigheth the states and deserts of Men, and ordaineth all things for the welfare of his chosen ones.

7. We ought not therefore to despair when we are tempted, but so much the more fervently to pray unto God, that he will vouchsafe to help us in all tribulations; who surely, according to the words of St. *Paul*, will give with the temptation such issue, that we may be able to bear it. Let us therefore humble our selves under the hand of God in all temptations and tribulations, for he will save and exalt the humble in spirit.

8. In temptations and afflictions, Man is proved how much he hath profited; and his reward is thereby the greater, and his graces do more eminently shine forth. Neither

ther is it any such great thing if a Man be devout and fervent, when he feeleth no affliction; but if in time of adversity he bear himself patiently, there is hope then of great proficiency in grace. Some are kept from great temptations, and are often overcome in small ones which do daily occur; to the end that being humbled, they may never presume on themselves in great matters, who are baffled in so small things.

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## CHAP. XIV.

### *Of avoiding rash judgment.*

TUrn thine eyes unto thy self, and beware thou judg not the deeds of other Men. In judging of others a Man laboreth in vain, often erreth, and easily sinneth; but in judging and discussing of himself, he always laboreth fruitfully. We often judg of things according as we fancy them; for private affection bereaves us easily of true judgment. If God were always the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so much troubled, through the repugnance of our carnal mind.

2. But

2. But oftentimes something lurketh within, or else occurreth from without, which draweth us after it. Many secretly seek themselves in their actions, and know it not. They seem also to live in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will and opinion; but if things succeed otherwise than they desire, they are straightways troubled and much afflicted. The diversities of judgments and opinions, cause oftentimes dissentions between religious and devout Persons, between Friends and Countrymen.

3. An old custom is hardly broken, and no Man is willing to be led further than himself can see. If thou dost more rely upon thine own reason or industry, than upon that power which brings thee under the obedience of Jesus Christ, it will be long before thou become illuminated; for God will have us perfectly subject unto him and that being enflamed with his love, we transcend the narrow limits of humane reason.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XV.

### *Of works done of Charity.*

FOr no worldly thing, nor for the love of any Man, is any evil to be done; but yet, for the profit of one that ſtandeth in need, a good work is ſometimes to be intermitted without any ſcruple, or changed alſo for a better. For by doing this, a good work is not loſt, but changed into a better. The exterior work without charity profiteth nothing; but whatſoever is done of charity, be it never ſo little and contemptible in the ſight of the world, it becomes wholly fruitful. For God weigheth more with how much love one worketh, than how much he doeth. He doeth much, that loveth much.

2. He doeth much, that doeth a thing well; he doeth well that rather ſerveth the community, than his own proper will. Oftentimes it ſeemeth to be charity, and it is rather carnality; becauſe natural inclination, ſelf-will, hope of reward, and deſire of our own intereſt will ſeldom be away.

3. He

3. He that hath true and perfect charity, seeketh himself in nothing; but only desireth in all things that the glory of God should be exalted. He also envieth none; because he affecteth no private good; neither will he rejoyce in himself: but wisheth above all things to be made happy in the enjoyment of God. He attributeth nothing that is good to any Man, but wholly referreth it unto God, from whom as from the fountain all things proceed; in whom finally all the Saints do rest as in their highest fruition. O, he that had but one spark of true charity, would certainly discern that all earthly things be full of vanity.

## CHAP. XVI.

### *Of bearing with the defects of others.*

THose things that a Man cannot amend in himself or in others, he ought to suffer patiently, until God order things otherwise. Think that perhaps it is better so for thy trial and patience, without which all our good deeds are not much to be esteemed.

eſteemed. Thou oughteſt to pray notwithſtanding when thou haſt ſuch impediments, that God would vouchſafe to help thee, and that thou mayeſt bear them patiently.

2. If one that is once or twice warned will not give over, contend not with him: but commit all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his name honored in all his ſervants, who well knoweth how to turn evil into good. Endeavor to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, of what ſort ſoever they be; for that thy ſelf alſo haſt many things which muſt be ſuffered by others. If thou canſt not make thy ſelf ſuch an one as thou wouldſt, how canſt thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking; We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we amend not our own faults.

3. We will have others ſeverely corrected, and will not be corrected our ſelves. The large liberty of others diſpleaſeth us; and yet we will not have our deſires denied us. We will have others kept under by ſtrict laws; but in no ſort will our ſelves be reſtrained. And thus it appeareth, how ſeldom we weigh our neighbor in the ſame ballance

ballance with our selves. If all Men were perfect, what should we have to suffer of our neighbor for God?

4. But now God hath thus ordered it, that we may learn to bear one anothers burden; for no Man is without fault, no Man but hath his burden, no Man sufficient of himself, no Man wise enough of himself; but we ought to bear with one another, comfort one another, help, instruct, and admonish one another. Occasions of adversity best discover how great virtue or strength each one hath; for occasions make not a Man frail, but do shew what he is.

## CHAP. XVII.

### *Of a retired life.*

THou must learn to break thy own will in many things, if thou wilt have peace and concord with others. It is no small matter to dwell in a religious community, and to converse therein without complaint, and to persevere therein faithfully until death. Blessed is he that hath there

there lived well, and ended happily. If thou wilt perſevere in grace as thou oughteſt, and profit in virtue, eſteem thy ſelf as a baniſhed Man, and a pilgrim upon earth. Thou muſt be contented for Chriſts ſake to be eſteemed as a fool in this world, if thou deſire to lead an holy life.

2. The wearing of a religious habit, and ſhaving of the crown, do little profit; but change of manners, and perfect mortification of paſſions, make a true religious Man. He that ſeeketh any thing elſe but God, and the ſalvation of his ſoul, ſhall find nothing but tribulation and ſorrow. Neither can he remain long in peace, that laboreth not to be the leaſt, and ſubject to all.

3. Thou cameſt to ſerve, not to rule. Know that thou waſt called to ſuffer and to labor, not to be idle, or to ſpend thy time in talk. Here therefore Men are proved as gold in the furnace. Here no Man can ſtand, unleſs he humble himſelf with his whole heart for the love of God.

## CHAP. XVIII.

### *Of the examples of the holy Fathers.*

CONsider the lively examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection and religion shined; and thou shalt see how little it is, and almost nothing, which we do now in these days. Alas, what is our life if it be compared to them! The Saints and Friends of Christ served the Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in labor and weariness, in watchings and fastings, in prayer and holy meditations, in persecutions and many reproaches.

2. O how many and grievous tribulations suffered the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, and all the rest that endeavored to follow the steps of Christ! They hated their lives in this world, that they might possess their souls in everlasting life. O how strict and self-renouncing a life, led those holy Fathers in the wilderness! How long and grievous tentations suffered they! How often were they assaulted by the enemy! What frequent and fervent prayers offered they to God! How rigorous an abstinence did

did they daily use! How great zeal and care had they of their spiritual proficiency! How strong a combat had they for the overcoming of their lusts! How pure and upright intentions kept they unto God! In the day they labored, and in the night they attended to continual prayer; although when they labored also, they ceased not from mental prayer.

3. They spent all their time with profit; every hour seemed short for the service of God; and by reason of the great sweetness they felt in contemplation, they forgot the necessity of corporal refreshments. They renounced all riches, dignities, honors, friends, and kinsfolk; they desired to have nothing which appertained to the world; they scarce took things necessary for the sustenance of life; they grieved to serve their bodies even in necessity. They were poor in earthly things, but very rich in grace and virtues. Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly they were refreshed with grace and divine consolation.

4. They were strangers to the world, but near and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing, and despicable to this present world; but they

were precious and beloved in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, lived in simple obedience, walked in love and patience: and therefore they profited daily in spirit, and obtained great grace in Gods sight. They were given for an example to all religious Men; and they should more provoke us to endeavor after spiritual proficiencies, than the number of the lukewarm livers should prevail to make us remiss.

5. O how great was the fervor of all religious persons in the beginning of their holy institution! How great was their devotion to prayer! What ambition to excel others in virtue! How exact discipline then flourished! How great reverence and obedience, under the rule of their Superiors, observed they in all things! Their footsteps yet remaining, do testifie that they were indeed holy and perfect Men; who fighting so valiantly trodd the world under their feet. Now he is greatly accounted of, that transgresseth not, and that can with patience endure that which he hath undertaken.

6 O the coldness and negligence of our times! that we so quickly decline from our

our first fervor, and are come to that pass, that very sloth and coldness of spirit maketh our own life tedious unto us. Would to God the desire to profit in virtue did not wholly sleep in thee, who hast often seen the many examples of devout and religious persons.

## CHAP. XIX.

### *Of the exercise of a good and religious person.*

THE life of a good and religious person ought to be adorned with all virtues; that he may inwardly be such as outwardly he seemeth to Men. And with reason thou oughtest to be much more within, than is perceived without. For God beholdeth us, whom we ought most highly to reverence whersoever we are, and walk in purity like Angels in his sight. Daily should we renew our purposes, and stir up our selves to fervor, as though this were the first day of our conversion; and to say, Help me my God in this my good purpose, and in thy holy service; and

grant that I may now this day begin perfectly; for that which I have done hitherto is nothing.

2. According to our purpose shall be the success of our spiritual profiting; and much diligence is necessary to him that will profit much. And if he that firmly purposeth often faileth, what shall he do that seldom purposeth any thing, or with little resolvedness: It may fall out sundry ways that we leave off our purpose; and the light omission of *spiritual* exercises seldom passes without some loss *to our souls*. The purpose of just Men depends upon Gods grace, and not upon their own wisdom; upon whom they always rely for whatsoever they take in hand. For Man doth purpose, but God doth dispose; neither is the way of Man in himself.

3. If an accustomed exercise be sometimes omitted, either for some act of piety, or profit to my brother; it may easily afterwards be recovered again. But if out of a slothful mind, or out of carelesness we lightly forsake the same, it is a great offence against God, and will be found to be prejudicial to our selves. Let us do the best we can, we shall easily fail in many things; yet must

must we always purpose some certain course, and especially against those vices which do most of all molest us. We must diligently search into, and set in order both the outward and the inward Man, because both of them are expedient to our coming forward in godliness.

4. If thou canst not continually recollect thy self, yet do it sometimes, at the least once a day, to wit, at morning or at night. In the morning fix thy good purpose; and at night examine thy self what thou hast done, how thou hast behaved thy self in thought, word, and deed; for in these perhaps thou hast often offended both God and thy neighbor. Gird thy loyns like a Man against the vile assaults of the Devil; bridle thy riotous appetite, and thou shalt be the better able to keep under all the unruly motions of the flesh. Be thou at no time idle altogether, but either reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or endeavoring something for the publick good. As for bodily exercises they must be used with great discretion, neither are they to be practised of all Men alike.

5. The exercises that are not common are not to be exposed to publick view; for

things private are practised more safely at home. Nevertheless thou must beware thou neglect not that which is common, and be more ready for what is private. But having fully and faithfully accomplished all thou art bound and enjoyned to do, if thou hast any spare time, betake thee to thy self, as thy devotion shall require. All cannot use one kind of exercise, but one is more convenient for this person, another for that; according to the seasonableness of times also, divers exercises are fitting. Some suite better with us on working days, other on holy days; some we have need of in the time of temptation, and of others in time of peace and quietness. Some we mind when we are pensive, and other some when we rejoyce in the Lord.

9. When chief Festivals draw near, good exercises are to be renewed, and the prayers of holy Men more fervently to be implored. From feast to feast we should make some good purpose, as though we were then to depart out of this world, and to come to the everlasting feast *in Heaven*. Therefore ought we carefully to prepare our selves at holy times, and to live more devoutly

devoutly, and to keep more exactly all things that we are to obſerve, as though we were ſhortly at Gods hands to receive the reward of our labors.

7. But if it be deferred, let us think with our ſelves that we are not ſufficiently prepared, and unworthy yet of ſo great glory which ſhall be revealed in us in due time; and let us endeavor to prepare our ſelves better for our departure. *Bleſſed is that ſervant* (ſaith St. Luke the Evangeliſt) *whom when his Lord cometh he ſhall find watching: Verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall make him ruler over all his goods.*

## CHAP. XX.

### *Of the love of ſolitude and ſilence.*

SEek a convenient time to retire into thy ſelf, and meditate often upon Gods benefits. Meddle not with curioſities; but read ſuch things which may rather yield compunction to thy heart, than buſy thy head. If thou wilt withdraw thy ſelf from ſpeaking vainly and from gadding idlely, as alſo from harkening after novelties

ties and rumors, thou shalt find leisure sufficient and convenient enough to meditate on good things. The greatest Saints avoided the society of Men, when they could conveniently, and did rather choose to serve God, and to live to God, in secret.

2. One said, As oft as I have been among Men, I returned home less a Man than I was before; and this we find true, when we talk long together. It is easier not to speak a word at all, than not to speak more words than we should: It is easier for a Man to keep home than to keep himself well when he is abroad. He therefore that intends to attain to the more inward and spiritual things of Religion, must with Jesus depart from the multitude and press of people. No Man safely doth go abroad, but he which gladly can abide at home; no Man speaks securely, but he that holds his peace willingly. No Man ruleth safely, but he that is ruled willingly; no Man securely doth command, but he that hath learned readily to obey.

3. No Man rejoyceth securely, unless he hath within him the testimony of a good conscience; and yet the security of the Saints was always full of the fear of God.

Neither

Neither were they leſs careful and humble in themſelves, for that they ſhined outwardly with grace and great virtues. But the ſecurity of the wicked riſeth out of pride and preſumption, and in the end it deceiveth them. Although thou ſeem to be a good religious Man, or a devout Hermite, yet promiſe not thy ſelf ſecurity in this life.

4. Oftentimes thoſe have fallen into greateſt danger by overmuch ſelf-confidence, who have been in greateſt eſteem and account amongſt Men. Wherefore it is more profitable to many not to be altogether free from temptations, but to be often aſſaulted, leſt they ſhould be too ſecure, and ſo perhaps be puffed up with pride; or too freely give themſelves to worldly comforts. O how good a conſcience ſhould he keep, that would never ſeek after tranſitory joy, nor entangle himſelf with the things of this world! O how great peace and quietneſs ſhould he poſſeſs, that would cut off all vain ſollicitude, and think only upon divine things, and ſuch as are profitable for his ſoul, and would place all his confidence in God!

5. No Man is worthy of heavenly comfort,

fort, unless he have diligently exercised himself in holy compunction. If thou desirest true contrition of heart, enter into thy closet, and shut out the tumults of the world, as it is written, In your chambers be ye grieved. In thy closet thou shalt find what abroad thou shalt often lose; the more thou visitest thy closet, the more thou wilt like it; the less thou comest thereunto, the more thou wilt loth it. If in the beginning of thy amendment thou art content to remain in it, and keep it well, it will afterwards be to thee a dear friend, and a most pleasant comfort.

6. In silence and in stillness a religious soul advantageth her self and learneth the mysteries of holy Scripture. There she findeth rivers of tears, wherein she may every night wash and cleanse her self; that she may be so much the more familiar with her Creator, by how much the further off she liveth from all worldly disquiet. Who so therefore withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friends, God with his holy Angels will draw near unto him. It is better for a Man to live privately and to have regard to himself, than to neglect his soul, though he could work wonders in the

the world. It is very commendable in a religious perſon; ſeldom to go abroad, and to be unwilling to ſee others.

7. Why art thou deſirous to ſee that which is unlawful for thee to enjoy? For the world paſſeth away and the luſts thereof. Our ſenſual deſires draw us to rove abroad; but when the time is paſt, what carrieſt thou home with thee but a burdened conſcience and diſtracted heart? A merry going out bringeth commonly a mournful return home; and a joyful evening makes *many times* a ſad morning. So all carnal joy enters gently, but in the end it bites and ſtings to death. What canſt thou ſee elſewhere, which thou canſt not ſee here? Behold the Heaven and the Earth and all the Elements; for of theſe are all things created.

8. What canſt thou ſee any where that can long continue under the Sun? Thou thinkeſt perchance to ſatiate thy ſelf, but thou canſt never attain it. Shouldſt thou ſee all things preſent before thine eyes, what were it but a vain *and unprofitable* ſight? Lift up thine eyes to God in the higheſt, and pray him to pardon all thy ſins and negligencies. Leave vain things

to

to the vain, but be thou intent upon those things which God commandeth thee. Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto thee Jesus thy beloved. Stay with him in thy closet; for thou shalt not find so great peace any where else. Hadst thou not gone abroad and hearkened to idle rumors, thou mightest the better have enjoyed quietness. But sith thou delightest sometimes to hear novelties, it is fit thou suffer for it some unquietness of mind.

## CHAP. XXI.

### *Of compunction of heart.*

IF thou wilt make any progress in godliness, keep thy self in the fear of God, and affect not too much liberty. Keep in aw all thy senses under *the severe rod of* discipline, and give not thy self over to foolish mirth. Give thy self to compunction of heart, and thou shalt gain much devotion thereby; compunction bringeth much good, which dissoluteness is wont quickly to destroy. It is a wonder that any Man can ever perfectly rejoyce in this life, if he duly

duly consider his banishment, and throughly weigh the many perils wherewith his soul is invironed.

2. The levity of our minds and the little care we have of our faults, maketh us insensible of the sorrows of our souls; but oftentimes we vainly laugh, when we have just cause to weep. There is no true liberty nor right gladness, but in the fear of God accompanied with a good conscience. Happy is he that can avoid all distracting impediments, and bring himself to the union of holy compunction. Happy is he that can abandon all that may defile or burthen his conscience. Resist manfully; one custome overcometh another. If thou canst let others alone in their matters, they likewise shall not hinder thee in thine.

3. Busie not thy self in matters which appertain to others; neither do thou trouble thy self with the affairs of thy Betters. Still have an eye to thy self first, and be sure more especially to instruct thy self before all thy loving friends. If thou hast not the favor of Men, be not grieved at it; but take this to heart, that thou dost not carry thy self so warily and circumspectly as it becometh

cometh the Servant of God, and a devout religious Man. It is better oftentimes and safer that a Man hath not many consolations in this life, especially such as are agreeable to the flesh. But that we have not at all or do very seldom taste divine consolations, the fault is ours, because we seek not after compunction of heart, nor do altogether forsake the vain and outward comforts *of this world.*

4. Know that thou art unworthy of divine consolation, and that thou hast rather deserved much tribulation. When a Man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole world grievous and bitter unto him. A good Man findeth always sufficient cause of mourning and weeping; for whether he consider his own or his neighbors estate, he knoweth that none liveth here without tribulation. And by how much a Man looks narrowly into himself, by so much the more he sorroweth. Our sins and wickednesses wherein we are so enwrapt, that we can seldom apply our selves to heavenly contemplations, do Minister unto us matter of most just sorrow and inward compunction.

5. Didst thou oftner think of thy death, than

than of thy living long, there is no queſtion but thou wouldſt be more careful to amend. I believe thou wouldſt willingly undergo any labor or ſorrow in this world, and not be afraid of the greateſt auſterity, if thou didſt conſider within thy ſelf the infernal pains in the other world. But becauſe theſe things enter not to the heart, and we ſtill love thoſe things only that delight us, therefore it is we remain very dull and cold in religion.

6. It is often our want of ſpirit which maketh our miſerable body ſo eaſily complain. Pray therefore unto the Lord with all humility, that he will vouchſafe to give thee the ſpirit of compunction. And ſay with the prophet, Pſal. 80, *Feed me, O Lord, with the bread of tears, and give me plenteouſneſs of tears to drink.*

## CHAP. XXII.

### *Of the conſideration of humane miſery.*

MIſerable thou art whereſoever thou be, or whitherſoever thou turneſt, unleſs thou turn thy ſelf unto God. Why

art thou troubled when things succeed not as thou wouldest or desirest? For who is he that hath all things according to his mind? Neither I nor thou, nor any Man upon earth; there is none in this world, be he King or Pope, without some tribulation or other. Who is then in the best case *or condition?* even he who can suffer something for God.

2. Many weak and infirm ones can say, Behold what an happy life hath such an one, how wealthy, how great he is, in how great power and dignity! But lift up thine eyes to the riches of heaven, and thou shalt see that all the goods of this life are nothing so to be accounted of. They are very uncertain, rather burdensome than otherwise, because they are never enjoyed without carefulness and fear. Mans happiness consisteth not in having abundance of wealth, but a mean estate should content him; it is truly misery enough even to live upon the earth. The more a Man would be spiritual, the more bitter to him is this present life; because he seeth more clearly and perceiveth more sensibly the defects of humane corruption. For to eat and to drink, to sleep and to watch, to labor and to rest, and

and to be ſubject to other neceſſities of nature is doubtleſs a great miſery and affliction to a religious Man, that would gladly be free and delivered from all ſin.

3. For the inward Man is much oppreſſed with theſe *outward and* corporal neceſſities whileſt we live in this world. Therefore the holy Prophet prayeth with great devotion to be delivered from them, ſaying, *Bring me, O Lord, out of my neceſſities.* But wo be to them that know not their own miſery; and a greater wo to them that love this miſerable and corruptible life. And ſome there be ſo much dote upon it, that although with great labor and pains they can ſcarce get mere neceſſaries, yet could they live here always, they would care nothing at all for the Kingdom of Heaven.

4. O how fooliſh are theſe and faithleſs in their hearts, who lye ſo deeply ſunk in the earth, that they can mind or reliſh nothing but carnal things! But miſerable wretches as they are, they ſhall in the end feel to their coſt how vile and how nothing that was which they loved: Whereas the Saints of God, and all the devout friends of Chriſt reſpected not thoſe things which

pleased the flesh, and which flourished in this life, but longed for the everlasting riches with their whole hope and desire. Their whole desire was carried upward to things durable and invisible, that the desire of things visible might not draw them to things below. O Brother, lose not thy hope of coming forward in godliness, there is yet time, the hour is not yet past

5. Why wilt thou defer thy good purpose from day to day? Arise and begin in this very instant, and say, Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be striving, now is the best time to amend my self. When thou art ill at ease and much troubled, then is the time of deserving best; thou must pass through fire and water before thou comest to the place of refreshing. Unless thou dost earnestly force thy self, thou shalt never get the victory over sin; so long as we carry about us this frail body of ours, we can never be without sin, or live without trouble and sorrow. We would gladly be quiet and freed from all misery, but seeing by sin we have lost our innocency, we have together with that lost also the true felicity. Therefore it becomes us to have patience, and to wait

for

for the mercy of God, till this our iniquity be put away, and this mortality of ours be ſwallowed up of life.

6. O how great is humane frailty, which is always prone to evil! to day thou confeſſeſt thy ſins, and to morrow thou committeſt the very ſame thou haſt confeſſed. Now thou art purpoſed to look well unto thy ways, and within a while thou ſo behaveſt thy ſelf, as though thou hadſt never any ſuch purpoſe at all. Good cauſe have we therefore to humble our ſelves, and never to have any great conceit of our ſelves; becauſe we are ſo frail and ſo inconſtant. Beſides, that may quickly be loſt by our own negligence, which by the grace of God and our own great pains we have ſcarce at length obtained.

7. What will become of us in the end, who begin to wax cold ſo timely? Wo be unto us, if we will ſo give our ſelves unto eaſe, as if all were in peace and ſafety, when as yet there appeareth no ſign of true holineſs in our converſations! We have need like young beginners to be newly inſtructed again to good life, if happily there be any hope of our future amendment and proficiency in ſpiritual things.

## CHAP. XXIII.

### *Of the meditation of Death.*

THere will very quickly be an end of thee here, therefore ſee what will become of thee hereafter. To day a Man, to morrow none; and out of ſight, out of mind. O the ſtupidity and hardneſs of Mans Heart, who thinketh only upon the preſent, and hath no more care of what is to come! Thou ſhouldeſt ſo order thy ſelf in all thy thoughts and actions, as if to day, yea this very moment, thou wert ready to depart. Hadſt thou a clear conſcience, thou wouldſt not greatly fear death. It were better to avoid ſin, than to fly death. If thou art not prepared to day, how wilt thou be prepared to morrow? To morrow is uncertain, and how knoweſt thou that thou ſhalt live till to morrow?

2. What availeth it to live long, when we are ſo little the better *by long living*! Alas! length of days doth oftner make our ſins the greater, than our lives the better. O that we had ſpent but one day well in this world! Many there are who count how

how long it is since their conversion; and yet ful slender oftentimes is the fruit of amendment of life. If to die be accounted dreadful, to live long may perhaps prove more dangerous. Happy is he that always hath the hour of his death before his eyes, and daily prepareth himself for to die. If at any time thou hast seen another Man die, make account thou must also pass the same way.

3. When it is morning, think thou mayest die before night, and when evening comes, dare not to promise thy self the next morning. Be thou therefore always in a readiness, and so lead thy life that death may never take thee unprepared. Many die suddenly and when they look not for it; for the Son of Man will come when we think not of his coming. When that last hour shall come, thou wilt begin to have a far different opinion of thy whole life that is past, and be exceeding sorry thou hast been so careless and remiss

4. O how wise and happy is he that now laboreth to be such an one in his life, as he wisheth to be found at the hour of his death! A perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire to go forward in vertue, the love of

discipline the painfulness of repentance, the readiness of obedience, the denying of ourselves, and the bearing any affliction for the love of Christ patiently, will give us great confidence we shall die happily. Whilst thou art in health thou mayest do much good, but when thou art sick, I see not what thou art able to do. Few by sickness grow better and more reformed; as also they who wander much abroad, seldom thereby become holy.

5. Trust not to friends and kindred, neither do thou put off the care of thy souls welfare till hereafter; for Men will sooner forget thee, than thou art aware of. It is better to look to it betime, and do some good beforehand, than to trust to other Mens courtesies. If thou beest not careful for thy self now, who will be careful for thee hereafter? The time that is now present is very precious, now are the days of salvation, now is the acceptable time. But alas! that thou shouldst spend thy time so idlely here, where thou mightest purchase to live eternally hereafter. The time will come when thou shalt desire one day or hour to amend in, and I cannot say that it will be granted thee.

6. O

6. O beloved, from how great danger mighteſt thou deliver thy ſelf! from how great fear free thy ſelf, if thou wouldſt be always mindful of death! Labor now to live ſo, that at the hour of death thou mayeſt rather rejoyce than fear; learn now to die to the world, that thou mayeſt then begin to live with Chriſt. Learn now to contemn all *earthly* things, that thou mayeſt freely go to Chriſt. Chaſtiſe thy body now by repentance, that thou mayeſt then have aſſured confidence.

7. Ah fool, why doſt thou think to live long, when thou canſt not promiſe to thy ſelf one day? How many have been deceived and ſuddenly ſnatcht away? How often doſt thou hear theſe reports, Such a Man is ſlain, another Man is drowned, a third breaks his neck with a fall from ſome high place, this Man died eating, and that Man playing? One periſhed by fire, another by the ſword, another of the plague, another was ſlain by Thieves. Thus death is the end of all, and Mans life ſuddenly paſſeth away like a ſhaddow.

8. Who ſhall remember thee when thou art Dead? Do, do now my beloved, whatſoever

soever thou art able to do; for thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor yet what shall befal thee after thy death. Now whilst thou hast time heap unto thy self everlasting riches, think on nothing but the salvation of thy soul, care for nothing but the things of God. Make now friends to thy self by honoring the Saints of God, and imitating their actions, that when thou failest in this short life, they may receive thee into everlasting habitations.

9. Keep thy self as a stranger and pilgrim upon the earth, and as one to whom the affairs of this world do nothing appertain. Keep thy heart free, and lifted up to God, because thou hast here no abiding city. Send thither thy daily prayers and sighs together with thy tears, that after death thy spirit may with much happiness pass to the Lord. *Amen.*

## CHAP. XXIV.

### *Of Judgment, and the punishment of Sins.*

IN all things have a special aim to thy end, and how thou wilt be able to stand before

before that ſevere Judg to whom nothing is hid, who is not pacified with gifts, nor admitteth any excuſes, but will judg according to right and equity. O wretched and fooliſh ſinner, who ſometimes feareſt the countenance of an angry Man; what anſwer wilt thou make to God who knoweth all thy wickedneſs! Why doſt thou not provide for thy ſelf againſt that great day of judgment, when no Man can excuſe or anſwer for another, but every one ſhall have enough to anſwer for himſelf? Now are thy pains profitable, thy tears acceptable, thy groans audible, thy grief pacifieth God, and purgeth thy ſoul.

2. The patient Man hath a great and wholeſome purgatory, who though he receive injuries, yet grieveth more for the malice of another, than for his own wrongs; who prayeth willingly for his adverſaries, and from his heart forgiveth their offences; he delayeth not to ask forgiveneſs of whomſoever he hath offended; he is ſooner moved to compaſſion than to anger; he often offereth *an holy* violence to himſelf, and laboreth to bring the body wholly into ſubjection to the ſpirit. It is better to purge out our ſins, and cut off our vices

vices here, than to keep them to be punished hereafter. Verily we do but deceive our selves through an inordinate love of the flesh.

3. What is it that that infernal fire feeds upon, but thy sins? The more thou sparest thy self now and followest the flesh, so much the more hereafter shall be thy punishment, and thou storest up greater fewel for that flame. In what thing a Man hath sinned, in the same shall he be the more grievously punished. There shall the slothful be pricked forward with burning goads, and the gluttons be tormented with great hunger and thirst. There shall the luxurious and lovers of pleasures be bathed in burning pitch and stinking brimstone, and the envious like mad Dogs shall howl for very grief.

4. There is no sin but shall have its proper torment. There the proud shall be filled with all confusion; the covetous shall be pinched with miserable penury; one hour of pain there shall be more bitter than a Thousand years of the sharpest pennance here! There is no quiet, no comfort for the damned there; yet here we have some intermission of our labors, and enjoy the comfort

comfort of our friends. Be now ſollicitous and ſorrowful because of thy ſins, that at the day of judgment thou mayeſt be ſecure with the company of bleſſed ſouls. For then ſhall the righteous with great boldneſs ſtand against ſuch as have vexed and oppreſſed them; then ſhall he ſtand to judg Men, who doth now humbly ſubmit himſelf to the cenſures of Men. Then ſhall the poor and humble have great confidence, but the proud Man ſhall be compaſſed with fear on every ſide.

5. Then will it appear that he was wiſe in this world, who had learned for Chriſt to be a fool and deſpiſed. Then ſhall every affliction patiently undergone delight us, when the mouth of iniquity ſhall be ſtopped up. Then ſhall the devout rejoyce, and the profane ſhall mourn. Then ſhall he more rejoyce that hath beat down his own fleſh, than he that hath abounded in all pleaſure and delight. Then ſhall the poor attire ſhine glorioufly, and the precious robes ſeem vile and contemptible. Then ſhall be more commended the poor cottage, than the gilded palace. Then will conſtant patience more avail us, than all earthly power. Then ſimple obedience

ſhall

shall be preferred before all worldly wisdom.

6. Then shall a good and clear conscience more rejoyce a Man than the profound *learning of* Philosophy. Then shall the contempt of riches weigh more than all the worldings treasure. Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou hast prayed devoutly, than that thou hast fared daintily. Then wilt thou be more glad thou hast kept silence, than that thou hast talked much. Then will good works avail more than many goodly words. Then a strict life and severe repentance will be more pleasing than all earthly delights. Accustome thyself now to suffer a little, that thou mayest then be delivered from more grievous pains. Prove first here what thou canst endure hereafter. If now thou canst endure so little, how wilt thou then be able to endure perpetual torments? If now a little suffering make thee so impatient, what will hell fire do hereafter? Assure thy self thou canst not have two Paradises, it is impossible to enjoy delights in this world, and after that to reign with Christ.

7. Suppose thou hast hitherto lived always in honors and delights, what would all

all this avail thee if thou wert to die at this inſtant? All therefore is vanity, but to love God and ſerve him only. For he that loveth God with all his heart, is neither afraid of death nor puniſhment, nor of judgement, nor of hell; for perfect love gives ſecure acceſs to God. But he that takes delight in ſin, what marvel is it if he be afraid, both of death and judgment? Yet it is good, although love be not yet of force to withhold thee from ſin, that at leaſt the fear of hell ſhould reſtrain thee. But he that layeth aſide the fear of God, can never continue long in good eſtate, but falleth quickly into the ſnares of the Devil.

## CHAP. XXV.

*Of the zealous amendment of our whole life.*

BE watchful and diligent in the ſervice of God; and often bethink thy ſelf wherefore thou cameſt hither, and why thou haſt left the world. Was it not that thou mighteſt live to God, and become a ſpiritual Man? Be fervent then to come forward

forward, for shortly thou shalt receive a reward of thy Labors; there shall not be then any fear of sorrow in thy coasts. Labor but now a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea perpetual joy *to thy soul.* If thou continuest faithful and fervent in doing *good,* no doubt but God will be faithful and liberal in rewarding thee. Thou oughtest to have a good hope for getting the victory; but thou must not be secure lest thou wax either negligent or proud.

2. When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once, being oppressed with grief, humbly prostrate himself in a Church in prayer, and said within himself, *O, if I knew that I should yet persevere!* he presently heard within him an answer from God, which said, *what if thou didst know it, what wouldest thou do? Do now what thou wouldest do then, and thou shalt be secure.* And being herewith comforted and strengthened, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noysome anxiety ceased; neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what should befal him; but rather labored to understand what was the perfect and acceptable will

of

of God for the beginning and accomplishing of every good work.

3. Hope in the Lord, and do good, saith the Prophet, and inhabit the land, and thou shalt be fed in the riches thereof. One thing there is that draweth many back from a spiritual progress, and the diligent amendment of their lives; *viz.* The horror of the difficulty, or the labor of the combat. But they above others improve most in virtue, that endeavor most to overcome those things which are grievous and contrary unto them. For there a Man improveth more and obtaineth greater grace, where he more overcometh himself and mortifieth himself in spirit.

4. But all Men have not alike, to overcome and mortifie; yet he that is zealous and diligent, though he have more passions, shall profit more in virtue, than another that is of a more temperate disposition, if he be less fervent in the pursuit of virtue. Two things especially much further our amendment, to wit, to withdraw our selves violently from that to which nature is viciously inclined, and to labor earnestly for that virtue which we most want. Be careful also to avoid with great diligence

those things in thy self, which do commonly displease thee in others.

5. Gather some profit to thy soul wheresoever thou be; so as if thou seest or hearest of any good examples, stir up thy self to the imitation thereof. But if thou seest any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou do not the same. And if at any time thou hast done it, labor quickly to amend it. As thine eye observeth others, so art thou also noted again by others. O how sweet and pleasant a thing it is, to see the Servants of Christ fervent and devout, endued with virtuous and decent manners! And on the contrary, How pitiful and grievous a thing it is, to see them that live in a dissolute and disordered sort, not applying themselves to that for which they are called! O how hurtful a thing it is, to neglect the good purposes of their vocation, and to busie themselves in that which is not committed to their care!

6. Be mindful of the profession thou hast made, and have always before the eyes of thy soul the remembrance of thy Saviour crucified. Thou hast good cause to be ashamed looking upon the life of Jesus Christ, seeing thou hast as yet no more endeavored

to

to conform thy self unto him, though thou hast walked a long time in the way of God. A religious person that exerciseth himself seriously, and devoutly in the most holy life and passion of our Lord, shall there abundantly find whatsoever is necessary and profitable for him; neither shall he need to seek any better thing, out of Jesus. O, if Jesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly and fully should we be instructed *in all truth?*

7. A fervent religious person taketh and beareth all well that is commanded him; but he that is negligent and cold, hath tribulation upon tribulation, and on all sides is afflicted; for he is void of inward consolation, and is forbidden to seek eternal comforts. A religious person that liveth not according to discipline, lies open to great mischief to the ruine of his soul. He that seeketh liberty and ease, shall ever live in disquiet; for one thing or other will displease him.

8. O that we had nothing else to do, but always with our mouth, and whole heart to praise our Lord God! O that thou mightest never have need to eat, nor drink, nor sleep; but mightest always praise God,

and only employ thy self in spiritual exercises; thou shouldest then be much more happy than now thou art, when for so many necessities thou art constrained to serve thy body. Would God these necessities were not at all, but only the spiritual refections of the soul, which, alas, we taste of too seldom.

9. When a Man cometh to that estate, that he seeketh not his comfort from any creature, then doth he begin perfectly to relish God. Then shall he be contented with whatsoever doth befal him in this world. Then shall he neither rejoyce in great matters, nor be sorrowful for small; but entirely and confidently commit himself to God, who shall be unto him all in all; to whom, nothing doth perish, nor die, but all things do live unto him, and serve him at a beck without delay.

10. Remember always thy end, and how that time lost never returns. Without care and diligence thou shalt never get virtue. If thou beginnest to wax cold, it will be evil with thee; but if thou give thy self to fervor *of spirit*, thou shalt find much peace, and feel less labor, through the assistance of Gods grace, and love of virtue.

virtue. The fervent and diligent Man is prepared for all things. It is harder to resist vices and passions, than to toil in bodily labors. He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater. Thou wilt always rejoyce in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably. Be watchful over thy self, stir up thy self, warn thy self, and whatsoever becomes of others neglect not thy self. The more *holy* violence thou usest against thy self, the more shall be thy *spiritual* profiting. *Amen.*

# THE SECOND BOOK.

## CHAP. I.

### *Of the inward Life.*

THE *Kingdom of God is within you*, ſaith the Lord. Turn thee with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forſake this wretched World, and thy Soul ſhall find reſt. Learn to deſpiſe exteriour things, and to give thy ſelf to the interior, and thou ſhalt perceive the Kingdom of God to come into thee. *For the Kingdom of God is peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, which is not given to the wicked. Chriſt will come into thee, and ſhew thee his conſolations, if thou prepare for him a worthy manſion within thee. All his glory

glory and beauty is within, and there he pleaſeth himſelf. The inward man he often viſits; and hath with him ſweet diſcourſes, pleaſant ſolace, much peace, wonderful familiarity.

2. O faithful Soul, make ready thy heart for this Bridegroom, that he may vouchſafe to come unto thee, and dwell within thee. For he ſaith, *If any love me, he will keep my words, and we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him.* Give therefore admittance unto Chriſt, and deny entrance to all others. When thou haſt Chriſt, thou art Rich, and he will ſuffice thee. He will be thy faithful and provident helper in all things, ſo as thou ſhalt not need to truſt in men. For men are ſoon changed, and quickly fail, but Chriſt remaineth for ever, and ſtandeth firmly unto the end.

3. There is little truſt to be put in frail and mortal man, though he be profitable and dear unto thee: neither oughteſt thou much to be grieved, if ſometimes he croſs and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be againſt thee, and ſo on the contrary, they often turn like unto the wind. Put all thy truſt

in God, let him be thy fear, and thy love: He will answer for thee, and do in all things what is best. Thou hast not here an abiding City; and whereſoever thou be, thou art a ſtranger and pilgrim: Neither ſhalt thou ever have reſt, unleſs thou be moſt inwardly united unto Chriſt.

4. Why doſt thou here gaze about, ſince this is not the place of thy reſt? In Heaven ought to be thy dwelling, and all Earthly things are to be lookt upon as it were by the way. All things paſs away, and thou together with them. Beware thou cleave not unto them, leſt thou be entangled, and ſo doſt periſh. Let thy thought be on the Higheſt, and thy prayer directed unto Chriſt without ceaſing. If thou canſt not contemplate high and heavenly things, reſt thy ſelf in the paſſion of Chriſt, and dwell willingly in his Holy wounds. For if thou fly devoutly unto the wounds and precious marks of the Lord Jeſus, thou ſhalt feel great comfort in tribulation: Neither wilt thou much care for being deſpiſed of men, and wilt eaſily bear words of detraction.

5. Chriſt was alſo in the World deſpiſed of men, and in greateſt neceſſity, forſaken by his acquaintance and Friends in the

the midſt of ſlanders. Chriſt would ſuffer and be deſpiſed; and dareſt thou complain of any? Chriſt had Adverſaries and Backbiters; and wilt thou have all men thy Friends and Benefactors? For what ſhall thy patience be crowned, if no adverſity happen unto thee? If thou wilt ſuffer no adverſity, how wilt thou be the Friend of Chriſt? Suffer with Chriſt and for Chriſt, if thou deſire to Reign with Chriſt.

6. If thou hadſt but once perfectly entred into the ſecrets of Jeſus, and taſted a little of his ardent affection; then wouldſt thou not weigh thine own commodity or diſcommodity, but wouldſt rather rejoyce at ſlanders, when they ſhould chance to be caſt upon thee: For the love of Jeſus maketh a man to deſpiſe himſelf. A lover of Jeſus and of the Truth, and a true inward Chriſtian, and one free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himſelf unto God, and lift himſelf above himſelf in Spirit, and with the greateſt enjoyment of his Soul reſt in God.

7. He that judgeth of all things as they are, and not as they are ſaid and eſteemed to be, is truly wiſe, and taught rather by God than men. He that can live inwardly, and

and make small reckoning of outward things, neither requireth places, nor attendeth times, for performing of Religious exercises. A Spiritual man quickly recollecteth himself because he never poureth out himself wholly to outward things. He is not hindred by outward labor or business, which may be necessary for the time: But as things fall out, so he frameth himself unto them. He that hath well ordered and disposed all things within, careth not for the strange and perverse carriages of men. So much is a man hindred and distracted, by how much he draweth *external* matters unto himself.

8. If all went well with thee, and if thou wert all purged, all things would fall out to thy good and advantage. But many things displease and often trouble thee, because thou art not yet perfectly dead unto thy self, nor separated from all earthly things. Nothing so defileth and intangleth the heart of man, as the impure love to Creatures. If thou refuse outward comfort, thou wilt be able to contemplate the things of Heaven, and often receive internal joy.

CHAP.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of humble ſubmiſſion.*

RESpect not much who is with thee, or who is againſt thee: But endeavor and take care that God may be with thee in every thing thou doeſt. Have a good Conſcience, and God will defend thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canſt hold thy peace and ſuffer, without doubt thou ſhalt ſee that our Lord will help thee. He knoweth the time and manner how to deliver thee, and therefore thou oughteſt to reſign thy ſelf unto him. It belongs to God to help, and to deliver from all ſhame. Oftentimes it is very profitable for the keeping us more humble, that others know and reprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbleth himſelf for his faults, then he eaſily pacifieth others, and quickly ſatisfieth thoſe that are offended with him. God protecteth and delivereth the humble; he loveth and comforteth the humble, unto the humble man he enclineth himſelf; unto the humble he giveth

giveth great Grace; and after his humiliation he raiſeth him unto Glory. Unto the humble he revealeth his ſecrets, and ſweetly draweth and inviteth him unto himſelf. The humble perſon though he ſuffer ſhame, is yet in peace; for that he reſteth in God, and not in the World. Do not think that thou haſt profited any thing, unleſs thou eſteem thy ſelf inferior to all.

## CHAP. III.

### *Of a good and peaceable Man.*

FIrſt, keep thy ſelf in peace, and then mayſt thou pacifie others. A peaceable man doth more good than he that is well Learned. A paſſionate man turneth even good into evil, and eaſily believeth the worſt. A good peaceable man turneth all things into good. He that is well in peace, is not ſuſpicious of any. But he that is diſcontented and troubled, is toſſed with divers ſuſpicions: He is neither quiet himſelf, nor ſuffereth others to be quiet. He often ſpeaketh that which he ought not to ſpeak; and omitteth that which were

more expedient for him to do. He considereth what others are bound to do, and neglecteth that which he is bound to himself. First therefore have a careful zeal over thy self, and then thou mayst justly shew thy self zealous also of thy neighbors good.

2. Thou knowest well how to excuse and colour thine own deeds, and thou wilt not receive the excuses of others. It were more meet that thou didst accuse thy self, and excusest thy Brother. If thou wilt be born withal, bear also with another. Behold how far off thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation, but only against himself. It is no great matter to converse with the good, and those that are of a gentle disposition; for that is naturally pleasing to all, and every one willingly enjoyeth peace, and loveth those best that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with unquiet, and perverse men, or with the disorderly, or such as contradict us, is a great grace, and a very commendable and manly deed.

3. Some there are that keep themselves in

in peace, and are in peace also with others. And there are some that neither are in peace themselves, nor suffer others to be in peace. Some there are who are troublesome to others, but always more troublesome to themselves. And others there are that keep themselves in peace, and labor to bring others unto peace. Our whole peace in this miserable life consisteth rather in humble suffering, than in not feeling adversities. He that can best tell how to suffer, will best keep himself in peace. He is a conqueror of himself, a Lord of the world a friend of Christ, and heir of Heaven.

## CHAP. IV.

### *Of a pure mind, and upright intention.*

WIth Two wings, Man is lifted up from earthly vanities, that is, with *simplicity* and *purity*. Simplicity ought to be in our intention: Purity in our affection. Simplicity doth intend God; Purity doth apprehend and take him. No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from all inordinate affection. If thou

thou intend and ſeek nothing elſe but the will of God and the good of thy neighbor, thou ſhalt enjoy internal liberty. If thy heart were ſincere and upright, then every creature would be unto thee a looking glaſs of life, and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature ſo little and abject that repreſenteth not the goodneſs of God.

2. If thou wert inwardly good and pure, then thou wouldeſt be well able to ſee and underſtand all things without any impediment. A pure heart penetrateth Heaven and Hell. Such as every one is inwardly, ſo he judgeth outwardly. If there be joy in the world, ſurely a Man of a pure heart poſſeſſeth it. And if there be any where tribulation and affliction, an evil conſcience beſt feels it. As Iron put into the fire loſeth its ruſt, and becometh all bright like fire, ſo he that wholly turneth himſelf unto God, is purged from all *fulneſs and* ſlothfulneſs, and is changed into a new Man.

3. When one beginneth to wax cold, then he is afraid of a ſmall labor, and willingly receiveth external comfort. But when he once beginneth to overcome himſelf perfectly, and to walk manfully in the

way

way of God; then he esteemeth those things to be light, which before seemed grievous unto him.

## CHAP. V

### *Of the consideration of ones self.*

WE cannot trust much to our selves, for that grace oftentimes and understanding is wanting. There is but little light in us, and that which we have we quickly lose by our negligence, and oftentimes we do not perceive our own inward blindness. We often do evil, and excuse it worse. We are sometimes moved with passion, and we think it to be Zeal. We reprehend small things in others, and pass over greater matters in our selves. We quickly feel and weigh what we suffer at the hands of others; but we mind not what others suffer from us. He that doth well and rightly considers his own works, will find little cause to judg hardly of another.

2. The inward Christian preferreth the care of himself before all other cares. And he

he that diligently attendeth unto himself, doth seldom speak much of others. Thou wilt never be so inwardly religious, unless thou pass over other Mens matters with silence, and look especially to thy self. If thou attend wholly unto God and thy self, thou wilt be little moved with whatsoever thou seest abroad. Where art thou, when thou art not with thy self? And when thou hast run over all, what hast thou then profited, if thou hast neglected thy self? If thou desirest peace of mind and true union, thou must put all things behind thee, and look only upon thy self.

3. Thou shalt therefore profit much, if thou keep thy self free from all temporal cares. Thou shalt greatly decrease, if thou esteem any thing of this world. Let nothing be greater unto thee, nothing acceptable, but only God himself, or that which is of God. Esteem all comfort vain which thou receivest from any creature. A soul that loveth God, despiseth all things that be inferior unto God. God alone is everlasting, and of infinite greatness, filling all creatures; the souls solace, and the true joy of the heart.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the joy of a good conscience.*

THe glory of a good Man, is the testimony of a good conscience. Have a good conscience, and thou shalt ever have joy. A good conscience is able to bear very much, and is very chearful in adversities. An evil conscience is always fearful and unquiet. Thou shalt rest sweetly, if thy heart do not reprehend thee. Do thou never rejoyce, but when thou hast done well. Sinners have never true mirth, nor feel inward peace; because *there is no peace to the wicked*, saith the Lord. And if they should say, We are in peace, no evil shall fall upon us, and who shall dare to hurt us? Believe them not; for upon a sudden will arise the wrath of God, and their deeds shall be brought to nought, and their thoughts shall perish.

2. To glory in tribulation is no hard thing for him that loveth; for to glory so, is to glory in the Cross of our Lord. That glory is short, which is given and received from Men. Sorrow always accompanieth the

the glory of the world. The glory of the good is in their conſciences, and not in the tongues of Men. The gladneſs of the juſt is of God, and in God; and their joy is of the truth. He that deſireth true and everlaſting glory, careth not for that which paſſeth away with time. And he that ſeeketh temporal glory, or contemneth it not from his heart; ſheweth himſelf but little to eſteem of the glory of Heaven. He enjoyeth great tranquility and peace of mind, that careth neither for the praiſes, nor diſpraiſes of Men.

3. He will eaſily be content and pacified, whoſe conſcience is pure. He is not the more holy, though thou commend him; nor the more abject, though thou diſpraiſe him. What thou art, that thou art; neither canſt thou be ſaid to be greater, than what thou art in the ſight of God. If thou conſider what thou art within thee, thou wilt not care what Men ſay of thee. Man ſeeth in the face, but God looketh into the heart. Man conſidereth the deeds, but God weigheth the intention. To do always well, and to eſteem little of himſelf, is a ſign of an humble ſoul. To refuſe to be comforted by any creature, is a ſign of great purity, and inward confidence.

4, He that seeketh to witness for himself from without, doth shew that he hath wholly committed himself unto God. *For not he that commendeth himself, the same is approved* (saith blessed Paul) *but whom* God *commendeth.* To walk inwardly with God, and not to be possessed with any outward affection, is the state of a spiritual Man.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Of the love of Jesus above all things.*

BLessed is he that understandeth what it is to love Jesus, and to despise himself for Jesus. Thou oughtest to leave thy beloved, for thy beloved; for that Jesus will be beloved alone above all things. The love of things created is deceitful and unconstant; the love of Jesus is faithful and constant. He that cleaveth unto creatures, shall fall with that which is subject to fall; He that embraceth Jesus, shall stand firmly for ever. Love him, and keep him for thy friend, who when all go away, will not forsake thee, nor suffer thee to perish in

in the end. Thou muſt once be left of all, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Keep cloſe to Jeſus both in life and death, and commit thy ſelf unto his truſt, who, when all fail, can alone help thee. Thy beloved is of that nature, that he will not admit of a corrival; but will have thy heart alone, and ſit like a King in his own throne. If thou couldeſt purge thy ſelf perfectly of all creatures, Jeſus would willingly dwell with thee. Whatſoever thou repoſeſt in Men, out of Jeſus, is all no better than loſt. Truſt not nor rely upon a reed full of wind; for that all fleſh is graſs, and all the glory thereof ſhall wither away as the flower of the field.

3. Thou ſhalt quickly be deceived, if thou look only to the outward ſhew of Men. And if in them thou ſeekeſt thy comfort and profit, thou ſhalt often feel loſs. If thou ſeekeſt Jeſus in all things, thou ſhalt ſurely find Jeſus. But if thou ſeekeſt thy ſelf, thou ſhalt alſo find thy ſelf, but to thine own harm. For Man doth more hurt himſelf if he ſeek not Jeſus, than the whole world and all his adverſaries could annoy him.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of familiar conversation with Jesus.*

WHen Jesus is present, all is well, and nothing seemeth difficult; but when Jesus is absent, every thing is hard. When Jesus speaketh not inwardly unto us, our comfort is nothing worth; but if Jesus speak but one word, we feel much consolation. Did not Mary presently rise from the place where she wept, when Martha said unto her, *The Master is come, and calleth for thee?* Happy is the hour when Jesus calleth from tears to spiritual Joy. How dry and hard art thou without Jesus! How fooliſh and vain, if thou desire any thing out of Jesus! Is not this a greater loss, than if thou shouldest lose the whole world?

2. What can the world profit thee without Jesus? To be without Jesus is a grievous Hell; and to be with Jesus is a sweet Paradise. If Jesus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee. He that findeth Jesus, findeth a good treasure, yea a good above all goods: And he that loseth Jesus, loseth too much,

much, and more than the whole world. He is moſt poor that liveth without Jeſus; and he is moſt rich that is well with Jeſus.

3. It is a piece of great skill to know how to converſe with Jeſus, and great wiſdom to know how to keep Jeſus. Be humble and peaceable, and Jeſus will be with thee. Be devout and quiet, and Jeſus will ſtay with thee. Thou mayeſt ſoon drive away Jeſus and loſe his grace, if thou turn aſide to outward things. And if thou ſhouldeſt drive him from thee, and loſe him, unto whom wilt thou flie, and what friends wilt thou then ſeek? Without a friend thou canſt not well live; and if Jeſus be not above all a friend unto thee, thou ſhalt be too ſorrowful and deſolate. Thou doeſt therefore fooliſhly, if thou doeſt truſt or rejoyce in any other. It is better for thee to have all the world againſt thee, than Jeſus offended with thee. Amongſt all things therefore that be dear unto thee, let Jeſus alone be thy chiefeſt beloved.

4. Love all for Jeſus, but Jeſus for himſelf. Jeſus Chriſt alone is ſingularly to be beloved; who alone is found to be good and faithful above all friends. For him,

and in him, let as well friends as foes be dear unto thee, and all these are to be prayed for, that all may know and love him. Never desire to be singularly commended or beloved, for that appertaineth only unto God, who hath none like unto himself. Neither do thou desire that the heart of any should be set on thee, nor do thou set thy heart on the love of any; but let Jesus be in thee, and in every good Man

5. Be pure and free within, and intangle not thy heart with any creature. Thou oughtest to be as it were naked, and to carry a pure heart to God, if thou wouldest be free to consider and see how sweet the Lord is. And truly, unless thou be prevented and drawn by his grace, thou shalt never attain to that happiness to forsake and cast off all, that thou alone mayest be united to him alone. For when the grace of God cometh unto a Man, then he is made able for all things. And when it goeth away, he is poor and weak, and as it were left only unto the lash and scourge of every adversary. In this thou oughtest not to be dejected, nor despair; but to resign thy self with all indifferency unto the will of God, and to bear all things that befal thee for the

glory

glory of Christ; for after winter followeth ſummer, after night cometh day, and after a tempeſt, fair weather.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Of the want of all comfort.*

IT is no hard matter to deſpiſe humane comfort, when we have divine. It is much and very much, to be able to want both humane and divine comfort; and for the Glory of God, to be willing to endure deſolation of heart; and to ſeek himſelf in nothing, nor to regard his own merit. What great matter is it, if thou be chearful and devout at the coming of grace? This hour is wiſhed for of all Men. He rideth eaſily enough whom the grace of God carrieth. And what marvel if he feel not his burden, who is born up by the Almighty, and led by the ſoveraign guide?

2. We are always willing to have ſomething for our comfort; and a Man doth hardly put off *and forſake* himſelf. The holy martyr St. Laurence overcame the world with his Prelates becauſe he deſpiſed whatſoever

soever seemed delightsom in the world, and for the love of Christ patiently suffered Situs to be taken from him, whom he most dearly loved. He overcame therefore the love of Man by the love of the Creator, and he rather chose the divine good pleasure, than humane comfort. See thou also learn to forsake some necessary thing, and a beloved friend, for the love of God. Be not grieved when thou art forsaken by a friend, knowing that we all at length must be separated one from another.

3. A Man must fight long, and mightily with himself, before he get the full victory over himself, and be able to draw his whole heart in to God. When a Man trusteth in himself, he easily slideth unto humane comforts, but a true lover of Christ, and a diligent follower of virtue betakes not himself to *humane* comforts, nor seeketh such sensible sweetnesses, but rather hard exercises, and to sustain great labors for Christ.

4. When therefore spiritual comfort is given thee from God, receive it thankfully; but know that it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. Be not puffed up, joy not too much, neither do thou presume vainly;

vainly; but be rather the more humble for that gift, and more wary and ſollicitous in all thine actions; for that hour will paſs away, and temptation will ſucceed. When conſolation is taken from thee, deſpair not preſently; but with humility and patience wait for the Heavenly viſitation; for God is able again to give thee greater conſolation. This is not new nor ſtrange unto them that have experience in the way of God; for the great Saints and ancient prophets had oftentimes experience of ſuch kind of viciſſitudes.

5. For which cauſe one under the enjoyment of divine favor, ſaid, *I ſaid in my proſperity, I ſhall never be moved.* But in the want of this, he addeth what he found in himſelf; ſaying, *thou turn'dſt thy face from me, and I became troubled.* Yet doth he not deſpair in the midſt of theſe changes, but more earneſtly prayeth unto the Lord, and ſaith, *Unto thee, O Lord, will I cry, and I will pray unto my God.* Laſtly, he receiveth the fruit of his prayer, and witneſſeth that he was heard, ſaying, *The Lord hath heard me, and taken pity on me; the Lord is become my helper.* But wherein? *Thou haſt turned,* ſaith he, *my ſorrow into joy, and thou haſt compaſſed*

*compassed me about with gladness.* If great Saints have been so dealt withal, we that are weak and poor ought not to despair, if we be sometimes fervent and sometimes cold; for the Spirit cometh and goeth, according to the good pleasure of his will. For which cause blessed Job saith, *Thou visitest him early in the morning, and suddenly thou provest him.*

6. Whereupon therefore can I hope, or wherein ought I to trust, but in the great mercy of God alone, and in the only hope of heavenly grace? For whether I enjoy the presence of good Men, or religious brethren, or faithful friends, or holy Books, or excellent treatises, or sweet songs and hymns, all these help little, and have little savor, when grace forsaketh me, and I remain left in mine own poverty. At such time there is no better remedy than patience, and the ordering of my self according to the will of God.

7. I never found any so religious and devout, that hath not had sometimes a withdrawing of grace, or felt not some decrease of zeal. There was never Saint so highly rapt, and illuminated who first or last was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the high

high contemplation of God, who hath not been exercised with some tribulation for Gods sake. For temptation going before, is wont to be a sign of ensuing comfort. And unto those that are proved by temptations, heavenly comfort is promised. *He that shall overcome*, saith he, *I will give him to eat of the Tree of life.*

8. But divine comfort is given, that a Man may be stronger to bear adversities. There followeth also temptation, lest he should wax proud of any good. The Devil sleepeth not, neither is the flesh as yet dead; therefore cease not to prepare thy self to the battel; For on thy right hand and on thy left are enemies that never rest.

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## CHAP. X.

### *Of thankfulness for the grace of God.*

WHy seekest thou rest, since thou art born to labor? Dispose thy self to patience rather than to comfort, and to the bearing of the Cross, rather than to gladness. What secular person is there that would

would not willingly receive spiritual joy and comfort, if he could always have it? For spiritual comforts exceed all the delights of the world, and pleasures of the flesh. All worldly delights are either vain or unclean; but spiritual delights are only pleasant and honest, sprung from virtue and infused by God into pure minds. But no Man can always enjoy these divine comforts according to his desire; for the time of temptation is not long away.

2. False freedom of mind, and great trust of our selves is very contrary to heavenly visitations. God doth well in giving the grace of comfort; but Man doth evil in not returning all again unto God with thanksgiving. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in us, because we are not thankful to the giver, and return them not wholly to the head-fountain. For grace ever attendeth him that is thankful; and from the proud shall be taken that which is wont to be given to the humble.

3. I desire not that consolation that taketh from me compunction; nor do I affect that contemplation which leadeth to haughtiness of mind. For all that is high, is not holy; nor all that is sweet, good;

nor

nor every desire, pure; nor every thing that is dear unto us, is grateful to God. I do willingly accept of that Grace, whereby I may ever become more humble and affected with an holy fear, and be made more ready to forsake my self. He that is taught by the gift of grace, and school'd by the scourge of the withdrawing thereof, will not dare to attribute any good to himself, but will rather acknowledg himself poor and naked. Give unto God that which is Gods, and ascribe unto thy self that which is thine own; that is, give thanks to God for his grace; and acknowledg that nothing is to be attributed to thee, but only sin and the punishment due thereunto.

4. Set thy self always in the lowest place and the highest shall be given thee; for the highest consist not without the lowest. The chiefest Saints before God, are the least in their own judgments; and how much the more glorious, so much the humbler within themselves. Those that are full of truth and Heavenly glory, are not desirous of vain glory. Those that are firmly setled and grounded in God, can no way be proud. And they that ascribe all

unto

unto God, what good soever they have received, seek not glory one of another, but would have that glory which is from God alone; and desire above all things to praise God in himself, and in all the Saints, and always tend unto the same.

5. Be therefore thankful for the least gift, so shalt thou be meet to receive greater. Let the least be unto thee also as the greatest, and the most contemptible as an especial gift. If thou consider the worth of the giver, no gift will seem little, or of too mean esteem. For it is not little that is given by the most high God. Yea, if he should give punishment and stripes, it ought to be grateful; for that he doth it always for our welfare, whatsoever he permitteth to happen unto us. He that desireth to keep the grace of God, let him be thankful for the grace given, and patient for the taking away thereof. Let him pray that it may return. Let him be wary and humble; lest he lose it.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

*How few the lovers of the Croſs of Chriſt are.*

JEſus hath now many lovers of his Heavenly Kingdom, but few bearers of his Croſs. He hath many deſirous of comfort, but few of tribulation. He findeth many companions of his table, but few of his abſtinence. All deſire to rejoyce with him, few will ſuffer any thing for him, *or with him.* Many follow Jeſus unto the breaking of Bread; but few to the drinking of the Cup of his paſſion. Many reverence his miracles, few follow the ignominy of his Croſs. Many love Jeſus as long as adverſities happen not. Many praiſe and bleſs him, as long as they receive any comforts from him. But if Jeſus hide himſelf, and leave them but a while; they fall either into complaint, or into too much dejection of mind.

2. But they that love Jeſus for Jeſus, and not for ſome comfort of their own, bleſs him in all tribulation and anguiſh of heart, as well as in the greateſt comfort. And although he ſhould never give them com-

fort, they notwithstanding, would ever praise him, and always give him thanks.

3. O how powerful is the pure love of Jesus, which is mixed with no self-love, nor proper interest! Are not all those to be called hirelings, that ever seek comforts? Do they not shew themselves to be rather lovers of themselves than of Christ, that always think of their own commodity and gain? Where may one be found that will serve God freely?

4. It is hard to find any one so spiritual that is stript of *the love of* all *earthly* things. For where is any one to be found that is indeed poor in spirit, and free from all *affection of* creatures? He's a Jewel of such price as is scarce to be met with in these parts. If a Man should give all his wealth, yet is it nothing. And if he should outwardly express great repentance, yet it is little. And if he should attain to all knowledg, he is yet afar off. And if he should be of great virtue, and very fervent devotion, yet there is much wanting; to wit, one thing, which is most necessary for him. What is that? that leaving all, he forsake himself, and go wholly from himself, and retain nothing of self-love; And when he hath

hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let him think that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not weigh that much which might be much esteemed; but according to truth let him affirm himself to be an unprofitable servant, as our Saviour hath said, *when you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants.* Then may he be truly poor and naked in spirit, and say with the Prophet, I am alone and poor; yet no man richer, no Man more powerful, no Man more free than he that can leave himself and all things, and set himself in the lowest place.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Of the high way of the holy Cross.*

UNto many this speech seemeth hard, *Deny thy self, take up thy Cross, and follow Jesus.* But it will be much harder to hear that last word. *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire.* For they that now willingly hear and follow the word of the Cross, shall not then fear to hear the sen-

tence of everlasting damnation. This sign of the Cross shall be in Heaven; when our Lord shall come to judgment. Then all the servants of the Cross, who in their life-time conformed themselves unto Christ crucified, shall draw near unto Christ the Judg with great confidence.

2. Why therefore feareſt thou to take up the Cross which leadeth thee to a Kingdom? In the Cross is salvation, in the Cross is life, in the Cross is protection against our enemies, in the Cross is infusion of Heavenly sweetness, in the Cross is strength of mind, in the Cross is joy of spirit, in the Cross is the height of virtue, in the Cross is the perfection of sanctity. There is no salvation of the soul, nor hope of everlasting life but in the Cross. Take up therefore thy Cross and follow Jesus, and thou shalt go into life everlasting. He is gone before, bearing his Cross, and is dead for thee on the Cross; that thou mayeſt also bear thy Cross and desire to die on the Cross *with him*. For if thou dieſt with him, thou shalt also live with him. And if thou be his companion in pain, thou shalt be partaker with him also in glory.

3. Behold in the Cross all doth consist and

and all lyeth in our dying *upon it*; for there is no other way unto life, and unto true inward peace, but the way of the Holy Croſs, and of daily mortification. Go where thou wilt, ſeek whatſoever thou wilt, thou ſhalt not find a higher way above, nor a ſafer way below, than the way of the Holy Croſs. Diſpoſe and order all things according to thy will and judgment; yet thou ſhalt ever find, that of neceſſity thou muſt ſuffer ſomewhat either willingly or againſt thy will, and ſo thou ſhalt ever find the Croſs. For either thou ſhalt feel pain in thy body, or in thy ſoul thou ſhalt ſuffer tribulation of ſpirit.

4. Sometimes thou ſhalt be forſaken of God, ſometimes thou ſhalt be troubled by thy neighbors; and which is more, oftentimes thou ſhalt be irkſome to thy ſelf; neither canſt thou be delivered or eaſed by any remedy or comfort; but ſo long as pleaſeth God, thou oughteſt to bear it. For God will have thee learn to ſuffer tribulation without comfort; and that thou ſubject thy ſelf wholly to him, and become more humble by tribulation. No Man hath ſo cordial a feeling of the paſſion of Chriſt, as he who hath ſuffered the like himſelf.

The Croſs therefore is always ready, and every where waits for thee. Thou canſt not eſcape it whitherſoever thou runneſt; for whereſoever thou goeſt, thou carrieſt thy ſelf with thee, and ſhalt ever find thy ſelf; both above and below, without and within, which way ſoever thou doſt turn thee, every where thou ſhalt find the Croſs; and every where of neceſſity thou muſt have patience, if thou wilt have inward peace, and enjoy an everlaſting Crown.

5. If thou bear the Croſs willingly, it will bear thee, and lead thee to thy deſired end, to wit, where there ſhall be an end of ſuffering, though here there ſhall not. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makeſt for thy ſelf a new burden, and encreaſeſt thy load, and yet notwithſtanding thou muſt bear it. If thou caſt away one Croſs, without doubt thou ſhalt find another, and that perhaps a more heavy one.

6. Thinkeſt thou to eſcape that which no Man could ever avoid? Which of the Saints in the world was without croſſes, and tribulation? Verily Jeſus Chriſt our Lord was never one hour without pain of ſuffering, ſo long as he lived, *Chriſt* (ſaith he) *ought to ſuffer, and ariſe again from the dead,*

*dead, and ſo to enter into his glory*, Luke 24. and how doſt thou ſeek any other way than this high way which is the way of the Holy Croſs?

7. The whole life of Chriſt was a Croſs and Martyrdom; and doſt thou ſeek reſt and joy? Thou art deceived, thou art deceived if thou ſeekeſt any other thing than to ſuffer tribulations; for this whole mortal life is full of miſeries, and environed on every ſide with Croſſes. And how much the more one hath profited in ſpirit, ſo much the heavier croſſes he oftentimes findeth, for the love he beareth to God increaſeth the grief which he endureth for his baniſhment.

8. But yet this Man, though ſo many ways afflicted, is not without ſome refreſhing comfort, for that he perceiveth much benefit to accrew unto him by the bearing of his Croſs. For whileſt he willingly putteth himſelf under it, all the burden of tribulation is turned into the confidence of divine comfort. And how much the more the fleſh is waſted by affliction, ſo much the more is the ſpirit ſtrengthened by inward grace. And ſometimes he is ſo comforted with the deſire of tribulation and ad-

verſity, for the love of conforming himſelf to the Croſs of Chriſt, that he would not wiſh at any time to be without ſorrow and tribulation; becauſe he believeth that ſo much the more acceptable he ſhall be unto God, how much the more, and more grievous things he can ſuffer for him. This is not the power of Man, but it is the grace of Chriſt, that can, and doth ſo much in frail fleſh; that what naturally it always abhorreth and flyeth, that by fervor of ſpirit, it encounters with delight.

9. It is not according to Mans inclination to bear the Croſs, to chaſtiſe and ſubdue the body, to fly honors, to ſuffer contumelies with a willing heart, to deſpiſe himſelf and to wiſh to be deſpiſed, to bear all adverſities and dammages, and to deſire no proſperity in this world. If thou conſidereſt thy ſelf, thou ſhalt be able to perform no ſuch matter of thy ſelf. But if thou truſteſt in the Lord, ſtrength ſhall be given thee from Heaven, and the world and fleſh ſhall be made ſubject to thy command. Neither ſhalt thou fear thy enemy the Devil, if thou be armed with faith, and beareſt the Croſs of Chriſt.

10. Set therefore thy ſelf, like a good

and

and faithful ſervant of Chriſt to bear manfully the Croſs of thy Lord, who was crucified for thee out of love. Prepare thy ſelf to bear many adverſities and divers kinds of troubles in this miſerable life; for ſo it will be with thee, whereſoever thou be, and ſo ſurely thou wilt find it, whereſoever thou hide thy ſelf. So it muſt be, and there is no remedy or means to avoid tribulation and ſorrow, but to bear them. Drink of the Cup of our Lord heartily, if thou wilt be his friend, and deſireſt to have part with him. As for comforts, leave them to God; let him do therein as ſhall beſt pleaſe him. Set thou thy ſelf to ſuffer tribulations, and account them the greateſt comforts; for that the ſufferings of this life are not worthy of the glory which is to come, although thou alone couldeſt ſuffer them all.

11. When thou ſhalt come to this eſtate, that tribulation ſhall ſeem ſweet and ſavory unto thee for Chriſt; then thou mayſt think it is well with thee, for thou haſt found a Paradiſe upon earth. As long as it is grievous to thee to ſuffer, and that thou deſireſt to fly it; ſo long ſhalt thou be ill at eaſe; and the tribulation thou flyeſt will follow thee every where.

12. If

12. If thou doſt ſet thy ſelf to that thou oughteſt, to wit, to ſuffer, and to die to thy ſelf, it will quickly be better with thee, and thou ſhalt find peace. Although thou ſhouldeſt have been rapt even unto the third Heaven with *Paul*, thou art not for this ſecured that thou ſhalt ſuffer no adverſity. I (ſaith Jeſus) *will ſhew him how great things he muſt ſuffer for my name.* It remaineth therefore, that thou ſuffer, if thou wilt love Jeſus, and perpetually ſerve him.

13. O that thou wert worthy to ſuffer ſomething for the name of Jeſus! how great glory would it be unto thee, what joy to all the Saints of God, how great edification alſo to thy neighbor! For all do commend patience; though few deſire to ſuffer. With great reaſon thou oughteſt to be willing to ſuffer a little for Chriſt; ſince many ſuffer far greater things for the world.

14. Know for certain that thou oughteſt to lead a dying life. And how much the more every one dyeth to himſelf, ſo much the more doth he begin to live to God. No Man is fit to attain unto Heavenly things, unleſs he ſubmit himſelf to the

the bearing of adverſities for Chriſt. Nothing is more grateful unto God, nothing more wholeſome to thee in this world, than to ſuffer willingly for Chriſt. And if it were in thy choice, thou ſhouldeſt rather wiſh to ſuffer Adverſities for Chriſt, than to enjoy the delight of many comforts; becauſe hereby thou ſhouldeſt be more like unto Chriſt, and more conformable to all the Saints. For our worthineſs, and the proficiency of our ſpiritual eſtate conſiſteth not in many ſweetneſſes and comforts, but rather in ſuffering great afflictions and tribulation.

15. If there had been any better thing, and more profitable to the health of Man than ſuffering, ſurely Chriſt would have ſhewed it by word and example. But he plainly exhorteth all the Diſciples that followed him, and all that deſire to follow him, to the bearing of the Croſs, and ſaith, *If any will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his Croſs, and follow me.* So that when we have read and ſearched all, let this be the laſt concluſion, *That by many tribulations we muſt enter into the Kingdom of God.*

THE

# THE THIRD BOOK.

## CHAP. I.

*Of the inward Speech of Chriſt unto a Faithful Soul.*

*I will hear what the Lord God will ſpeak in me.* Bleſſed is the ſoul that heareth the Lord ſpeaking in her, and receiveth from his mouth the word of comfort. Bleſſed are thoſe ears that receive the ſound of the divine voice, and liſten not to the whiſperings of the world. Bleſſed indeed are thoſe ears that hearken not to the voice which ſoundeth outwardly, but unto the truth which teacheth inwardly. Bleſſed are the eyes that are ſhut to outward things, but open to thoſe things that are internal.

Bleſſed

Bleſſed are they that enter into the inward things, and endeavor to prepare themſelves more and more by daily exerciſes to the attaining of Heavenly ſecrets. Bleſſed be they that delight to converſe with God, and rid themſelves of all worldly impediments.

2. Conſider theſe things, my ſoul, and ſhut up the door of thy ſenſual deſires, that thou mayeſt hear what thy Lord God ſpeaketh in thee. Thus ſaith thy beloved, I am thy ſafety, thy peace, and thy life; Keep thy ſelf with me, and thou ſhalt find peace. Leave all tranſitory things, and ſeek thoſe that be everlaſting. What are all temporal things, but deceiving ſnares? And what do all creatures avail thee, if thou be forſaken by the Creator? Forſake therefore all earthly things and labor to pleaſe thy Creator, and be Faithful unto him, that thou mayeſt attain unto the true happineſs.

CHAP.

## CHAP. II.

### *That truth ſpeaketh inwardly without noiſe of words.*

*Chriſtian.* Speak Lord, for thy ſervant heareth: I am thy ſervant, grant me unſterſtanding, that I may know thy teſtimonies. Incline my heart to the words of thy mouth. Let thy ſpeech diſtil as the dew *upon my ſoul.* The Children of *Iſrael* in times paſt ſaid unto *Moſes, Speak thou unto us, and we will hear thee: Let not the Lord ſpeak unto us, leſt we die.* Not ſo Lord, not ſo, I beſeech thee. But rather with the Prophet Samuel, I humbly and earneſtly intreat, *Speak Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.* Let not *Moſes* ſpeak unto me, nor any of the prophets, but do thou rather ſpeak, my Lord God, the inſpirer and enlightner of all the Prophets; for thou alone without them canſt perfectly inſtruct me, but they without thee can profit nothing.

2. They indeed may ſound forth words, but they cannot give ſpirit and life; they ſpeak marvellous well, but if thou be ſilent, they

they inflame not the heart. They may teach the letter, but thou openeſt the ſenſe. They bring forth myſteries, but thou unlockeſt the meaning of ſealed things. They declare thy commandments, but thou helpeſt to fulfil them. They ſhew the way, but thou giveſt ſtrength to walk in it. They work only exteriorly, but thou inſtructeſt and enlightneſt the heart. They water outwardly, but thou giveſt fruitfulneſs. They make a noiſe with words, but thou giveſt underſtanding to the hearing.

3. Let not therefore *Moſes* ſpeak unto me, but thou my Lord God, the everlaſting Truth; leſt I die; and prove untruitful, if I be warned outwardly only, and not inflamed within; leſt the word heard and not fulfilled, known and not loved, believed and not obſerved, turn to my condemnation. Speak therefore Lord, for thy ſervant heareth, for thou haſt the words of everlaſting life. Speak unto me to the comfort of my ſoul, and to the amendment of my whole life, and to thy praiſe and glory, and everlaſting honor.

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

### *That the words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.*

*Christ.* Son, hear my words, words of greatest sweetness, excelling all the knowledg of the Philosophers and wise Men of this world. My words are *spirit and life*, not to be weighed by the understanding of Man. They are not to be drawn to vain liking, but to be heard with silence, and to be received with all humility and great affection.

*Christian.* And I said, Blessed is the Man whom thou shalt instruct, O Lord, and shalt teach thy law, that thou mayest give him rest from the evil days, and that he be not destroyed upon earth.

2. *Christ.* I (*saith our Lord*) have taught the Prophets from the beginning, and cease not in these days to speak to every one; but many are hardned and deaf to my speech. The greater number do more willingly listen to the world, than to God; and follow sooner the desires of their flesh, than

than the will of God. The world promiſeth temporal and ſmall things, and is ſerved with great eagerneſs: I promiſe moſt high and eternal things, and the hearts of Men are nothing moved therewith. Who is he that ſerveth and obeyeth me with equal care to that with which the world and the Lords thereof are ſerved? *Bluſh O Sidon, ſaith the Sea.* And if thou ask the cauſe, hear wherefore: For a little Prebend a long journey is undertaken; for everlaſting life many will ſcarce once lift a foot from the ground. A thing of ſmall value is ſought after greedily; for a penny ſometimes there is foul contention; for a vain thing and fleight promiſe, Men ceaſe not to toil day and night.

3. But *alas* for an unchangeable good, for an ineſtimable reward, for the higheſt honor and glory without end, they are loth to take the leaſt pains. Bluſh therefore ſlothful and complaining Servant, that they are found to be more ready to diſtruction, than thou to life. They rejoyce more in vanity than thou in the truth. And yet they are ſometimes fruſtrated of their hope; but my promiſe deceiveth none, nor ſendeth him away empty that truſteth

in me. I will give that which I have promiſed, I will fulfil that which I have ſaid; but to him that remains faithful in my love to the end. I am the rewarder of all that are good, and do try my devout ſervants with ſtrong trials.

4. Write my words in thy heart and think diligently of them; for they will be very neceſſary in time of temptation. What thou underſtandeſt not when thou readeſt, thou ſhalt know in the day of viſitation. I am wont to viſit my elect two ſeveral ways, to wit, with temptation, and comfort. And I daily read two leſſons unto them, one reprehending their vices, another exhorting them to the increaſe of virtues. He that hath my words and deſpiſeth them, hath within himſelf that ſhall judg him at the laſt day.

*A Prayer to implore the grace of devotion.*

5. O Lord my God, thou art to me whatſoever is good. Who am I, that dare ſpeak unto thee? I am thy pooreſt ſervant and a moſt vile worm, much more poor and contemptible than I can or dare expreſs. Remember yet O Lord, that I am nothing, and

and can do nothing. Thou alone art good, juſt, and holy; thou canſt do all things, thou doeſt all things, thou filleſt all things, only the ſinner thou ſendeſt empty away. Remember thy mercies, and fill my heart with thy grace, who will not that thy works be void and in vain.

6. How can I bear up my ſelf in this miſerable life, unleſs thou ſtrengthen me with thy mercy and grace? Turn not thy face from me; delay not thy viſitation; draw not away thy comfort, leſt my ſoul become as the thirſty land unto thee. Lord, teach me to fulfil thy will, teach me to live worthily, and humbly in thy ſight, for thou art my wiſdom, thou doſt truly know me, and didſt know me before the world was made, and before I was born in the world.

## CHAP. IV.

### *That we ought to live in truth and humility before God.*

*Chriſt.* Son, walk before me in ſincerity and truth, and ever ſeek me in ſimplicity of heart. He that walketh before me in truth, ſhall be defended from evil incurſions, and the Truth ſhall deliver him from ſeducers, and from the detractions of the wicked. If the Truth ſhall have made thee free, thou ſhalt be truly free, and ſhalt not care for the vain ſpeeches of Men.

*Chriſtian.* Lord, it is true. According as thou ſaidſt, ſo I beſeech thee let it be with me, let thy Truth teach me, and keep me, and bring me ſafe to an happy end. Let it deliver me from all evil affection and inordinate love; and I ſhall walk with thee in great freedom of heart.

2. *Chriſt.* I will teach thee (ſaith the Truth) thoſe things that are right and pleaſing in my ſight. Think of thy ſins with great diſpleaſure and grief, and never

ver esteem thy self any thing for thy good works. Thou art in very deed a sinner, thou art subject to, and encumbred with, many passions. Of thy self thou always tendest to nothing; thou art quickly cast down, quickly overcome, quickly troubled, quickly dissolved. Thou hast nothing wherein thou canst glory, but many things for which thou oughtest to despise thy self; for thou art much weaker than thou art able to comprehend.

3. And therefore let nothing seem much unto thee whatsoever thou doest. Let nothing seem great, nothing precious and wonderful; let nothing seem worthy of estimation, nothing high, nothing truly and commendable to be desired, but that which is everlasting. Let the eternal Truth above all things please thee. Let thy own great unworthiness always displease thee. Fear nothing, blame and fly nothing so much as thy vices and sins; which ought to displease more than the losses of any thing whatsoever. Some walk not sincerely in my sight, but led by a certain curiosity and pride, will know my secrets, and understand the high things of God, neglecting themselves and their own salvation.

These oftentimes, for that I resist them, do fall into great temptations and sins, for their pride and curiosity.

4. Fear the judgments of God, dread the wrath of the Almighty. But discuss not the works of the highest. Search thine own iniquities, in how much thou hast offended, and how much good thou hast neglected. Some carry their religion only in Books, some in pictures, some in outward signs and figures. Some have me in their mouths, but little in their hearts. There are others that being illuminated in their understandings, and purged in their affection do always breath after things eternal, and are unwilling to hear of the things of this world, and do serve the necessities of nature with grief; and these perceive what the Spirit of Truth speaketh in them; because it teacheth them to despise Earthly, and love Heavenly things; to neglect the world, and all the day and night to desire Heaven.

CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the wonderful effect of divine Love.*

*Christian*, I praise thee, O Heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ for that thou hast vouchsafed to remember me a poor Creature. O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, thanks be unto thee, who sometimes with thy comfort refreshest me unworthy of all comfort. I ever bless and glorifie thee with thy only begotten Son, and the holy Ghost, for ever and ever. O Lord God, the holy lover of my soul, when thou shalt come into my heart, all that is within me will rejoyce. Thou art my glory and the exultation of my heart. Thou art my hope and refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But for that I am yet weak in love, and imperfect in virtue, I have need therefore to be strengthened and comforted by thee; visit me therefore often, and instruct me with thy holy discipline. Deliver me from evil passions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that being cured

within and well purged, I may be made fit to Love, ſtrong to ſuffer, and conſtant to perſevere.

3. Love is a great thing, in very truth a great good; which alone maketh every thing that is heavy, light; and beareth equally that which is unequal. For it carrieth a Burden without a Burden, and maketh every thing that is bitter, ſweet and ſavoury. The noble Love of Jeſus inforceth Man to do great things, and ſtirreth him up to deſire always what is moſt perfect. Love will be aloft, and not kept down with any baſe thing. Love will be free and looſe from all worldly affection, to the end its inward ſight be not prejudiced, that it be not either entangled by any temporal proſperity, or ſubdued by adverſity. Nothing is ſweeter than Love, nothing ſtronger, nothing higher, nothing more large, nothing more pleaſant, nothing fuller nor better in Heaven or in Earth: Becauſe Love is born of God, and cannot reſt but in God, above all Creatures.

4. He that loveth, flyeth, runneth, and rejoyceth; he is free and not held in. He giveth all for all, and hath all in all, for that

that he resteth in one Highest above all, from whence all good floweth and proceedeth. He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods unto the giver. Love oftentimes knoweth no measure, but is inflamed above all measure. Love feeleth no burden, weigheth no pains, desireth above its strength, complaineth not of impossibility, for that it thinketh all things lawful and possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and performeth and bringeth many things to pass; whereas he that doth not Love, fainteth and lyes down.

5. Love watcheth, and sleeping sleepeth not: Being wearied, is not tired; straitned, is not pressed; frightned, is not troubled: But like a lively flame and burning Torch, breaking upwards, and securely passeth through all. If any one loveth, he knoweth what this voice cryeth: A loud cry in the ears of God is the ardent affection of the Soul, which saith, *My God, my Love, thou art wholly mine, and I wholly thine.*

6. Enlarge me in Love, that with the inward mouth of my heart I may taste how sweet it is to Love, and to be melted, and swim

ſwim in thy Love. Let me be poſſeſſed by Love, mounting above my ſelf with exceſſive fervor and admiration. Let me Sing the Song of Love, let me follow thee on high my Beloved; let my Soul rejoycing through Love, ſpend it ſelf in thy Praiſe. Let me Love thee more than my ſelf, and not my ſelf but for thee, and all in thee that truly Love thee, as the law of Love commandeth which ſhineth out from thee.

7. Love is ſwift, ſincere, pious, pleaſant and delightful, ſtrong, patient, faithful, prudent, long-ſuffering, manly, and never ſeeking it ſelf. For where one ſeeketh himſelf, there he falleth from Love. Love is circumſpect, humble, and upright: not ſoftly, nor light, not attending unto vain things, ſober, chaſt, conſtant, quiet, and guarded in all the ſenſes. Love is ſubject and obedient to Superiors, mean and abject to it ſelf, devout and thankful unto God, truſting and hoping always in him, even then when God imparteth no ſweetneſs unto it: For without ſorrow none liveth in Love.

8. He that is not ready to ſuffer all things, and ſtand to the will of his beloved,

ed, is not worthy to be called a Lover. A Lover ought to embrace willingly all that is hard and diſtaſteful for his Beloved; and not to turn away from him for any contrary accidents.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the proof of a true Lover.*

*Chriſt.* Son, thou art not yet a ſtrong and prudent Lover. *Chriſtian.* Wherefore Lord? *Chriſt.* Becauſe thou giveſt over for a ſmall adverſity, and too greedily ſeekeſt comfort. A ſtrong Lover ſtandeth firmly in temptations, and giveth not credit to the crafty perſwaſions of the enemy. As I pleaſe him in proſperity, ſo I am not unpleaſant to him in adverſity.

2. A prudent Lover conſidereth not ſo much the gift of his Lover, as the Love of the giver. He rather eſteemeth the good will than the value, and placeth all gifts under his Beloved. A noble Lover reſteth not in the gift, but in me above every gift. All therefore is not loſt, if ſometimes thou haſt leſs taſte of me than thou wouldeſt.

That

That good and sweet affection which thou sometimes feelest, is the effect of present grace, and a certain fore-taste of the heavenly Country; whereon thou mayest not rely too much, for it goeth and cometh. But to fight against evil motions of the mind which may happen unto thee, and to despise the suggestions of the Devil, is a notable sign of virtue and shall have great reward.

3. Let not therefore strange fancies forced into thee, of any matter whatsoever, trouble thee. Retain a strong purpose and an upright intention to God. Neither is it an illusion that sometimes thou art suddenly rapt on high, and presently returnest again unto the accustomed vanities of thy heart. For thou dost rather unwillingly suffer them, than commit them: and as long as they displease thee, and thou strivest against them, it is matter of reward, and no loss.

4. Know that thy antient enemy doth ever strive to hinder thy desire to good, and to deliver thee from all religious exercise; to wit, from the devout memory of my passion, from the profitable remembrance of thy sins, from the guard of thine own

own heart, and from the firm purpoſe of profiting in virtue. He injecteth many evil thoughts into thy mind, that he may cauſe a wearineſs and horror in thee, to draw thee from Prayer and Holy reading. Humble confeſſion is diſpleaſing unto him; and if he could, he would cauſe thee to ceaſe from receiving the Sacrament. Truſt him not, nor care for him, although he ſhould often ſet ſnares of deceit to intrap thee. Charge him with it when he ſuggeſteth evil and unclean thoughts unto thee; Say unto him, Away unclean Spirit, bluſh miſerable wretch; thou art very unclean that bringeſt ſuch things unto mine ears. Away from me wicked deceiver, thou ſhalt have no part in me: But Jeſus ſhall be with me as a ſtrong Warrior, and thou ſhalt ſtand confounded. I had rather die, and undergo any torment, than conſent unto thee. Hold thy peace and be ſilent; I will hear thee no more, though thou ſhouldeſt work me many troubles. The Lord is my light and my Salvation, whom ſhall I fear? If whole Armies ſhould ſtand together againſt me, my heart ſhall not fear. The Lord is my helper and my redeemer.

5. Fight like a good Soldier: and if thou

sometimes fall through frailty, take greater strength than before, trusting in my more abundant grace: and take great heed of vain pleasing of thy self and of pride. This brings many into error, and makes them sometimes fall into almost incurable blindness. Let the fall of the proud foolishly presuming of themselves serve thee for a warning, and keep thee perpetually humble.

## CHAP. VII.

### *That grace is to be hid under the veil of Humility.*

*Christ.* Son, it is more profitable and safe for thee to hide the grace of devotion; not to extol thy self, nor to speak much, nor to esteem much thereof, but rather to despise thy self, and fear it, as given to one unworthy thereof. This affection is not to be cleaved unto, which may be quickly changed unto the contrary. Think when thou art in grace, how miserable and needy thou art wont to be without grace. Neither doth therein only consist,

ſiſt, the proficiency of a ſpiritual life, when thou haſt the grace of comfort; but when thou humbly, ſelf-denyingly and patiently ſuffereſt the withdrawing thereof, ſo that thou be not then leſs diligent in the exerciſe of prayer, nor ſuffer the reſt of thy accuſtomed duties to be neglected; but that thou willingly perform what lieth in thee, according to the beſt of thy power and underſtanding, not neglecting thy ſelf wholly for the dryneſs and trouble of mind which thou feeleſt.

2. There are many that when it ſucceedeth not well with them, preſently they become impatient or ſlothful. The way of Man is not always in his power, but it belongeth to God to give and to comfort when he will, and how much he will, and whom he will; as it ſhall pleaſe him, and no more. Some unadviſed perſons have overthrown themſelves for the *greedy deſire which they had of* the grace of devotion; attempting more than they were able to perform, not weighing the meaſure of their weakneſs, but following rather the deſire of their heart, than the judgment of reaſon. And becauſe they preſumed on greater matters than was pleaſing to God, they quickly

quickly loſt his grace. They became needy, and left in a dejected eſtate, that built themſelves neſts in Heaven; to the end that being humbled and impoveriſhed, they might learn not to flie with their own wings, but to truſt under my wings. They that are yet but novices and unacquainted in the way of the Lord, unleſs they govern themſelves by the counſel of diſcreet Perſons, may eaſily be deceived and overthrown.

3. And if they will rather follow their own judgment, than give credit to others that are experienced, their end will be dangerous, if they will not be drawn from their own conceit. Seldom thoſe that are ſelfwiſe ſuffer themſelves humbly to be governed by others. A little knowledg with Humility, and a ſlender underſtanding, is better than great meaſures of learning with a vain ſelf-liking. It is better for thee to have little than much of that whereof thou mayeſt be proud. He doth not diſcreetly, that wholly giveth himſelf over to mirth, forgetting his former poverty, and the chaſte fear of God, which feareth to loſe the grace which he hath obtained. Neither is he virtuouſly wiſe, that in time of adverſity

adverſity or any tribulation whatſoever, yieldeth to deſpairing thoughts and thinketh and imagineth of me leſs confidently than he ought.

4. He that will be over ſecure in time of peace, ſhall be often found in time of war too dejected and fearful. If thou couldeſt always continue humble and lowly within thy ſelf, and order and govern thy ſpirit well, thou ſhouldeſt not ſo ſoon fall into danger and offence. It is good counſel, that when fervor of ſpirit is kindled within thee, thou ſhouldeſt think what will become of thee, when that light ſhall leave thee. And when that doth happen, remember the light may return again, which for thy inſtruction and my glory I have withdrawn for a time.

5. Such proof is often more profitable, than if thou ſhouldeſt always enjoy proſperity according to thy deſire. For a Mans worthineſs is not to be judged by the number of viſions and comforts which he hath, or by his knowledg in Scripture, or by his being placed in high degree; but in that he is grounded in true humility, and filled with divine love; if he always purely and entirely ſeek the honor of God, if he eſteem

himself nothing, and unfriendly despise himself, and rejoyce more to be despised and humbled by others, than to be honored.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of a mean conceit of our selves in the sight of God.*

*Christian.* Shall I speak unto my Lord sith I am Dust and Ashes? If I esteem better of my self, behold thou standest against me, and my iniquities bear true witness *against me*: Neither can I speak against it. But if I abase and esteem nothing of my self, and cast off all self-esteem, and (as I am) account my self to be Dust, thy grace will be favorable unto me, and thy light will be near unto my heart; and all self-esteem, how little soever shall be swallowed up in the deep Valley of my nothingness, and perish everlastingly. There thou shewest my self unto me, what I am, what I have been, and whither I am come; for I am nothing, and I knew it not. And if I be left to my self, behold I become nothing but mere weakness. But if thou suddenly look

look upon me, I am presently made strong, and filled with new joy. And it is a great marvel, that I am so suddenly lifted up, and so graciously embraced by thee, that of mine own weight always sink downward.

2. Thy Love is cause hereof, freely preventing me, and relieving me in so many necessities, preserving me also from grievous dangers, and delivering me (as I may truly say) from innumerable evils. For surely by inordinate loving my self, I lost my self and by seeking thee alone, and purely loving thee, I have found both my self and thee, and by that Love have more deeply brought my self to nothing. For that thou, O most sweet Lord, dealest with me above all desert, and above all that I dare hope and request.

3. Blessed be thou my God; for although I be unworthy of any benefits, yet the nobleness of thy bounty and thy infinite goodness never ceaseth to do good even to the ungrateful, and to them that be turned away far from thee. Turn us unto thee, O Lord, that we may be thankful, humble, and holy; for thou art our safety, our power, and our strength.

## CHAP. IX.

### *That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the last end.*

*Christ.* Son, I ought to be thy chiefest and last end, if thou desirest to be truly blessed. With this intention thy affection shall be purified which is oftentimes inclined inordinately to it self and unto Creatures. For if in any thing thou seekest thy self, thou presently faintest and driest up within thy self. Refer therefore all things chiefly unto me, for I am he that have given all. Consider every thing as flowing from the Highest good; and therefore all things are to be reduced unto me as unto their Original.

2. Out of me, as out of a living Fountain, the little and the great, the poor and the rich, to draw the water of life: and they that willingly and freely serve me, shall receive grace for grace. But he that will glory out of me, or be delighted in any particular good, shall not be grounded in true joy, nor enlarged in his heart, but shall be many ways encumbred and straitned.

ned. Thou oughteſt therefore to aſcribe nothing of good unto thy ſelf, nor attribute goodneſs unto any Man; but give all unto God, without whom Man hath nothing. I have beſtowed all, and will that all be returned unto me again; and with great ſtrictneſs I require thanks.

3. This is the truth that putteth to flight vain Glory, and if heavenly grace and true Love enter in, there ſhall be no envy nor ſtraitneſs of heart, neither ſhall there be any place for ſelf-love. For Divine Love overcometh all, and enlargeth all the powers of the Soul. If thou beeſt truly wiſe, in me alone thou wilt rejoyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: For none is good, but God alone, who is to be praiſed above all things, and to be bleſſed in all.

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## CHAP. X.

*That the World being deſpiſed, it is a ſweet thing to ſerve God.*

*Chriſtian.* Now I will ſpeak again, O Lord, and will not be ſilent, I will ſay in the ears of my God, my Lord, and

my King that is on High, *Psal.* 31. *O how great is the abundance of thy goodness, O Lord, which thou hast laid up for those that fear thee*! But what art thou to them that Love thee? What to them that serve thee with their whole heart? Truly unspeakable is the sweetness of contemplating thee, which thou bestowest on them that Love thee. In this chiefly thou hast shewed me the sweetness of thy Love: For that when I was not, thou madest me; and when I went astray far off from thee, thou broughtest me back again, that I might serve thee, and hast commanded me to Love thee.

2. O Fountain of everlasting Love, what shall I say of thee? How can I forget thee, that hast vouchsafed to remember me, even when I wasted away, and perished? Thou hast shewed mercy to thy Servant beyond all my expectation: And hast exhibited thy favor and friendship beyond all merit. What shall I return unto thee for this grace. For it is not granted to every one to forsake all things, to renounce the World, and to undertake a life of Religious retiredness. It is much that I should serve thee, whom all Creatures are bound to serve. It ought not to seem much

unto

unto me to ſerve thee; but this rather ſeemeth much and marvellous unto me that thou vouchſafeſt to receive into thy ſervice one ſo poor and unworthy, and to joyn him with thy beloved Servants.

3. Behold, all is thine which I have, and whereby I ſerve thee. And yet contrarywiſe thou rather ſerveſt me than I thee. Behold, Heaven and Earth, which thou haſt created for the ſervice of Man are ready at hand, and do daily perform whatſoever thou doſt command; and this is little; yea, thou haſt alſo appointed the Angels to the ſervice of Man. But that which excelleth all this is, that thou thy ſelf haſt vouchſafed to ſerve Man, and haſt promiſed to give thy ſelf unto him.

4. What ſhall I give thee for all theſe thouſands of benefits? I would I could ſerve thee all the days of my life. I would I were able at leaſt for one day, to do thee ſome worthy ſervice! Thou art truly worthy of all ſervice, of all honor, and everlaſting praiſe. Thou art truly my Lord, and I thy poor Servant, that am bound to ſerve thee with all my might, neither ought I ever to be weary of praiſing thee. And

this I wish to do, this I desire; and whatsoever is wanting unto me, vouchsafe I beseech thee to supply.

5. It is great honor, a great glory to serve thee, and despise all things for thee. For great grace shall be given to them that shall willingly subject themselves to thy most holy service, They shall receive the most sweet comfort of the holy Ghost, that for thy love shall renounce all carnal delights, they shall attain great freedom of mind, that for thy names sake shall enter into the narrow way, and shall have left off all worldly care.

6. O sweet and delightful service of God, by which Man is truly made free and holy! O sacred state of religious employment, which maketh Man equal to Angels, pleasing to God, terrible to Devils, grateful and of great esteem to all the faithful! O service to be imbraced and always wished for by which we obtain the greatest good, and attain to that joy which never shall have end!

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

*That the desires of our heart are to be examined and moderated.*

*Christ.* Son, thou oughtest to learn many things more, which thou hast not well learned.

*Christian.* What are those Lord?

*Christ.* That thou frame thy desires wholly according to my pleasure; and be not a lover of thy self, but an affectionate follower of my will. Thy desires oftentimes enflame thee, and drive thee forwards with violence: But consider whether thou art moved rather for my honor, than for thine own profit. If I be the cause, thou wilt be well content with whatsoever I shall ordain: But if there lurk in thee any self-seeking, behold this is it that hindereth thee and weigheth thee down.

2. Beware therefore thou lean not too much upon thy own preconceived desire, without asking my counsel, lest perhaps afterwards it repent thee, and thou begin now to dislike that which before did please thee, and which thou earnestly desiredst

as

as the best. For every affection that seemeth good is not presently to be followed, nor every contrary affection at the first to be avoided. It is expedient sometimes to use a restraint even in good desires and endeavors, lest by importunity thou incurre distraction of mind, and by thy want of self-government beget a scandal unto others, or being gainsaid by others thou be suddenly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou oughtest to use violence, and resist manfully thy sensual appetites, and respect not what the flesh would, or would not; but rather to labor that even perforce it be subject to the spirit. And it is to be chastised so long, and to be forced under servitude, until it readily obey in all things, and learn to be content with a little, and to be pleased with plain things, and not to murmure against any inconvenience.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XII.

### *of patience, and of striving against concupiscence.*

*Christian.* Lord God, I perceive patience is very necessary unto me, for that many adversities do happen in this life. For howsoever I shall dispose of my peace, my life cannot be without war and affliction.

*Christ.* So it is Son. And my will is not that thou seek after that peace which is void of temptations, or that which feeleth no contrariety; but then think that thou hast found peace, when thou art exercised with sundry tribulations, and tried in many adversities.

2. If thou say, that thou art not able to suffer much, how then wilt thou endure the Fire hereafter? Of two evils the less is always to be chosen. That thou maist therefore avoid everlasting punishment in the next World, endeavor to suffer patiently for God the present evils of this. Dost thou think that the Men of this World suffer little or nothing? Look into the life even

even of them that live in greatest delicacies, and thou shalt find it otherwise. But thou wilt say, they have many delights, and follow their own wills, and therefore they make small account of their tribulations: Be it so, that they have whatsoever they will; but how long dost thou think it will last?

3. Behold, the wealthy of this World vanish away like smoak, and there shall be no memory of their joys past. Yea, even while they live also, they rest not in them without bitterness, irksomeness and fear. For the self same thing in which they take their delight, is oftentimes unto them the cause of sorrow. They have their desert, who for that they inordinately seek and follow delights, they do not enjoy them but with shame and sorrow.

4. O how short and false, how inordinate and filthy are all those pleasures! Yet so Drunken and Blind are Men that they understand it not: But like Dumb beasts, for a little pleasure of a corruptible life, they incur the *Eternal* death of their Soul. Do not thou therefore my Son, go after thy Lusts, but forsake thine own will, *Psal.* 37. *Delight in the Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thy heart.*

5. For

5. For if thou desire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me, behold, in the contempt of all wordly things, and in the cutting off all base delights shall be thy blessing, and abundant comforts shall be given thee. And how much the more thou withdraweſt thy self from all comfort of Creatures, so much the sweeter and more powerful consolations shalt thou find in me. But at first thou canst not attain unto them without some sorrow, nor without a laborious conflict. Thy old custom will make resistance, and thou must overcome it with another custom that is better. Thy flesh will murmur; but thou must bridle it with fervor of Spirit. The old Serpent will sting and trouble thee; but by Prayer he shall be put to flight, and by profitable industry thou shalt stop the way against him.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIII.

### *Of the humble obedience of a Subject, according to the example of Christ.*

*Christ.* Son, he that endeavoreth to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraweth himself from grace. And he that seeketh things private, shall lose the publick. He that doth not willingly and freely submit himself to his Superior, it is a sign that his flesh is not as yet perfectly obedient unto him, but oftentimes kicketh, and murmureth against him. Learn therefore readily to submit thy self to thy Superior, if thou desirest to subdue thine own flesh. For the outward enemy is sooner overcome, if the inward Man be not wasted. There is no worse enemy, nor more troublesome to the Soul, than thou art unto thy self, not agreeing well with the Spirit. Thou must of necessity have a true contempt of thy self, if thou wilt prevail against flesh and blood.

2. Because thou lovest thy self as yet too inordinately, therefore thou art afraid to resign thy self wholly to the will of others.

But

But what great matter is it, if thou, that art Dust and nothing, submit thy self to a Man for God, when I the Almighty and highest Soveraign who created all things of nothing, humbly submitted my self unto Man for thee? I became the most humble and abject of all Men, that thou mightest overcome thy pride with my humility. Learn to obey thou that art Dust. Learn to humble thy self thou Earth and Clay, and put thy self under the Feet of all Men. Learn to break thine own will, and to yield thy self to all Subjection.

3. Be vehement against thy self, and suffer not pride to live in thee: But so humble and submit thy self to all, that every one may go over thee, and tread thee as dirt of the Streets under their Feet. Vain Man, what canst thou complain of? What canst thou answer, foul sinner, to them that reprove thee, who hast so often offended God, and so many times deserved Hell? But mine eye hath spared thee, because thy Soul was precious in my sight; that thou mightest know my Love, and always remain thankful for my benefits; and that thou mightest continually give thy self to true subjection and humility, and

mightest

mightest bear patiently the contempt of thy self.

## CHAP. XIV.

*Of the secret Judgments of God to be considered, lest we be exalted in our good deeds.*

*Christian.* Thou thundereſt forth thy Judgments over me, O Lord, and ſhakeſt all my bones with fear and trembling, and my Soul is ſore afraid. I ſtand aſtoniſhed, when I conſider that the Heavens are not pure in thy ſight. If thou haſt found wickedneſs in Angels, and haſt not pardoned them; what ſhall become of me? Stars fell from Heaven, and what do I preſume that am Duſt? They whoſe works ſeemed commendable, fell into the loweſt miſery: And I have ſeen them, that did eat the Bread of Angels, to be delighted with the husks of Swine.

2. There is therefore no ſanctity, if thou, O Lord, withdraweſt thy hand. No wiſdom availeth, if thou ceaſeſt to Govern. No ſtrength helpeth, if thou leaveſt to defend. No chaſtity is ſecure, if thou doſt not protect

protect it. No cuſtody of our own profitable, if thy ſacred watchfulneſs be not preſent. For, if we be left of thee, we ſink and periſh; but if thou vouchſafeſt to viſit us, we are raiſed up and live. We are inconſtant, but by thee we are eſtabliſhed: we wax cold, but by thee we are enflamed.

3. O how meanly and humbly ought I to think of my ſelf! how little, yea nothing ought I to eſteem it, if I ſeem to have any good! O Lord, with what profound Humility ought I to ſubmit my ſelf to thy bottomleſs judgements; where I find my ſelf to be nothing elſe, but nothing, and nothing! O unmeaſurable weight! O ſea that can never be paſſed over, where I find my ſelf only and wholly nothing! Where then is the lurking hole of glory? Where is the confidence conceived of virtue? All vain glorying is ſwallowed up in the deep of thy judgements over me.

4. What is all fleſh in thy ſight? Shall the clay glory againſt him that frameth it? How can he be lifted up with vain words, whoſe heart is truly ſubject to God? All the world cannot lift him up, whom the Truth hath ſubjected unto it ſelf. Neither

ſhall he be moved with the Tongues of all his praiſers, that hath ſetled his whole hope in God. For as for them that ſpeak, behold, they all are nothing; they ſhall paſs away with the ſound of their words; but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.

## CHAP. XV.

*How we are to ſtand affected, and what we are to ſay, in every thing which we deſire.*

*Chriſt.* Son, ſay thus in every thing, Lord, if it be pleaſing unto thee, let this be done in this ſort; Lord, if it be to thy honor, let this be done in thy Name; Lord, if thou ſeeſt it expedient for me, and alloweſt it to be profitable, then grant unto me, that I may uſe this unto thine honor. But if thou knoweſt it will be hurtful unto me, and not profitable to the health of my ſoul, take away this deſire from me. For every deſire proceedeth not from the holy Ghoſt, though it ſeem unto Man right and good. It is hard to judge rightly whether a good Spirit or the contrary

trary drive thee to desire this or that; or whether also by thine own spirit thou be moved thereunto. Many are deceived in the end, who at the first seemed to be led by a good Spirit.

2. Always therefore, whatsoever occurreth unto thy mind to be desired, let it be desired and prayed for in the fear of God and with Humility of heart; and above all thou oughtest to commit the whole unto me with resignation of thy self, and thou oughtest to say, Lord thou knowest what is best, let this or that be done as thou pleasest. Give what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt. Deal with me as thou thinkest good, and as best pleaseth thee, and is most for thy honor. Set me, where thou wilt, and deal with me in all things according to thy will. I am in thy hand; turn me, and turn me again which way soever thou please. Behold I am thy Servant, prepared for all things; for I desire not to live unto my self, but unto thee; and O that I could do it worthily and perfectly!

*A Prayer for the fulfilling of the will of God.*

3. Grant me thy Grace O most gracious Jesus, that it may be with me, and labor with me, and persevere with me until the end. Grant me always to desire and will that which is most acceptable unto thee, and best pleaseth thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will ever follow thine, and agree perfectly with it. Let my will and nill be all one with thine, and let me not will or nill any thing else, but what thou willest or nillest.

4. Grant that I may die to all things that are in the World, and to love to be contemned for thy sake and not to be known in this world. Grant that above all things that can be desired, I may rest in thee, and may quiet my heart in thee. Thou art the true peace of the heart, thou art the only rest; out of thee all things are troublesom and unquiet. In this very peace, that is, in thee, the one chiefest eternal Good, I will sleep and rest. Amen.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XVI.

*That true comfort is to be ſought in God alone.*

WHatſoever I can deſire or imagine for my comfort, I look not for it here, but hereafter. For if I ſhould alone have all the comforts of the world, and might enjoy all the delights thereof, it is certain that they could not long endure. Wherefore my ſoul, thou canſt not be fully comforted, nor have perfect delight but in God, the comforter of the poor, and the helper of the humble. Expect a while, O my ſoul, expect the divine promiſe and thou ſhalt have abundance of all good things in Heaven. If thou deſire inordinately the things that are preſent, thou ſhalt loſe the celeſtial and eternal. Uſe temporal things, and deſire eternal. Thou canſt not be filled with any temporal goods, becauſe thou art not created to enjoy them.

2. Although thou ſhouldeſt enjoy all created good, yet couldſt thou not be happy thereby nor bleſſed; but in God, that hath created all things, thy whole

beatitude and happineſs conſiſteth; not ſuch as is ſeen, and commended by the fooliſh lovers of the world, but ſuch as the good and faithful Servants of Chriſt expect, and the ſpiritual and pure in heart, whoſe converſation is in Heaven, ſometimes have a foretaſt of. Vain and ſhort is all humane comfort. Bleſſed and true is the comfort which is received inwardly from the Truth. A Religious Man everywhere carrieth with him Jeſus his comforter, and ſaith unto him, Be preſent with me Lord Jeſus in every place and time. Let this be my comfort, to be willing to want all humane comfort. And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will and juſt proving of me be unto me as the greateſt comfort; for thou wilt not be angry always, neither wilt thou threaten for ever.

## CHAP. XVII.

*That all our care is to be placed in God.*

*Chriſt.* Son, ſuffer me to do with thee what I pleaſe. I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkeſt as Man; thou

thou judgeſt in many things as humane affection perſwadeth thee.

*Chriſtian.* Lord, what thou ſayeſt is true. Thy care for me is greater than all the care that I can take for my ſelf. For he ſtandeth very totteringly, that caſteth not his whole care upon thee. Lord ſo that my will may remain right and firm towards thee, do with me whatſoever it ſhall pleaſe thee. For it cannot be but good whatſoever thou doeſt with me.

2. If it be thy will I ſhould be in darkneſs, be thou bleſſed; and if it be thy will I ſhould be in light, be thou again Bleſſed. If thou vouchſafeſt to comfort me, be thou Bleſſed; and if thou wilt afflict me, be thou ever equally bleſſed.

*Chriſt.* Son, Thus thou oughteſt to be minded, if thou wilt walk with me. Thou muſt be as ready to ſuffer, as to rejoyce. Thou oughteſt to be as willing to be poor and needy, as full and rich.

3. *Chriſtian.* Lord, I will willingly ſuffer for thee, whatſoever thy pleaſure is ſhall befall me. I will receive indifferently from thy hand good and evil, ſweet and ſowre, delightful and ſorrowful, and give thee thanks for all that befalleth me.

Keep me from all sin, and I will neither fear death nor Hell; so as thou dost not for ever cast me from thee, nor blot me out of the Book of life, what tribulation soever befal me shall not hurt me.

## CHAP. XVIII.

### *That temporal miseries after the example of Christ, must be born patiently.*

*Christ.* Son, I descended from Heaven for thy Salvation; I took upon me thy miseries, my own love and not any necessity drawing me thereunto; that thou mightest learn patience, and not grudgingly bear temporal miseries. For from the hour of my birth, until my death on the Cross, I was not without suffering of grief. I suffered great want of temporal things; I often heard many complaints against me; I bore patiently shame and reproaches; for benefits I received ingratitude; for miracles, blasphemies; for Heavenly Doctrine, reprehensions.

2. *Christian.*

2. *Chriſtian.* Lord, for that thou wert patient in thy life-time, chiefly fulfilling herein the commandment of thy Father, it is reaſon that I a miſerable ſinner ſhould ſhew my ſelf patient according to thy will, and for my ſouls welfare bear the burden of this corruptible life as long as thou wilt. For although this preſent life be burdenſom, yet notwithſtanding it is now by thy grace made very gainful; and by thy example and the footſteps of thy Saints, more plain and tolerable to the weak. Yea, much more comfortable alſo than it was in times paſt in the old Law, when the gate of Heaven remained ſhut, and the way alſo to Heaven ſeemed darker, when ſo few took care to ſeek after thy Kingdom. Neither they alſo that then were juſt and ſuch as ſhould be ſaved, could enter into the Heavenly Kingdom, before the ſatisfaction of thy holy paſſion and death.

3. O how many and great thanks am I bound to render unto thee, that thou haſt vouchſafed to ſhew unto me and to all the faithful a direct and ſure way to thy everlaſting Kingdom! For thy life is our way, and by holy patience we go unto thee that art our Crown. If thou hadſt not gone before

before us and taught us, who would have taken care to follow? Alas! How many would stay behind and remain far off, if they beheld not thy noble example? Behold we are yet cold, although we have heard of so many of thy wonders, and thy *Heavenly* documents; what would become of us, if we had not so great a light *given us* to follow thee?

## CHAP. XIX.

### *Of suffering of injuries: and who is proved to be truly patient.*

*Christ.* What is it thou sayest, Son? Cease to complain, considering my passion, and that of my other Saints. Thou hast not yet made resistance unto blood. It is but little thou sufferest, in comparison of them that have suffered so much, were so strongly tempted, so grievously afflicted, so many ways tried and exercised. Thou oughtest therefore to call to mind the more heavy sufferings of others, that thou mayest the easier bear the little adversities which thou sufferest. And if they seem not little unto

unto thee, beware leſt thy impatience be cauſe thereof. Yet whether they be little or great, endeavor to bear all patiently.

2. How much the better thou diſpoſeſt thy ſelf to ſuffering, ſo much the more wiſely thou doeſt, and ſo much the greater reward ſhalt thou receive; thou ſhalt more eaſily alſo endure it, if both in mind and by exerciſe thou art well prepared thereunto. Do not ſay, I cannot ſuffer theſe things at the hands of ſuch a perſon, nor ſuch things are not to be ſuffered by me: for he hath done me great wrong, and upbraided me with thoſe things which I never thought of; but of another I will willingly ſuffer, and as I ſhall ſee cauſe. Such a thought is fooliſh; it conſidereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it ſhall be crowned; but rather weigheth the perſons, and the injuries offered.

3. He is not truly patient, that will not ſuffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whom he liſteth. But the true patient Man mindeth not by whom he is exerciſed, whether by his Superiors, or ſome of his equals, or by his inferiors; whether by a good and holy Man, or by a perverſe and

and unworthy person. But indifferently from all creatures, how much soever, or how often soever any adversity befalleth him, he taketh all this thankfully as from the hands of God, and esteemeth it a great gain; for that nothing before God, how little soever, so it be suffered for God, shall pass without its reward.

4. Be thou therefore always prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have the victory. Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience. If thou wilt not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned. But if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently. Without labor there is no coming to rest, nor without fighting can the victory be obtained.

*Christian.* Lord, let that be made possible to me by thy grace, which seemeth impossible to me by nature. Thou knowest that I can suffer but little, and that I am quickly dismayed, when a small adversity ariseth. Let every exercise of tribulation be made amiable unto me, and be welcom for thy name; for to suffer and to be troubled for thy sake, is very profitable for my soul.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XX.

### *Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities: and of the miseries of this life.*

*Christian.* I will confess against me my unrighteousness, I will confess unto thee, O Lord, my infirmities. Oftentimes it is a small matter that dejecteth and grieveth me. I purpose to act with courage, but when a small temptation cometh, it bringeth me into very narrow straits. It is sometimes a very trifle, from whence great temptations do proceed. And whilest I think my self somewhat safe, when I least expect it I find my self sometimes overcome with a small blast.

2. Behold, therefore, Lord, my lowness and frailty every way known unto thee. Have mercy on me and deliver me out of the mire that I stick not fast therein, and that I may not for ever remain dejected. This is that which oftentimes strikes me at the very heart, and confounds me in thy sight, for that I am so subject to fall, and weak in resisting of my passions. And although

though I do not altogether consent, yet their continual assaults are troublesom and grievous unto me; and it is a very irksom thing to live thus daily in conflict. Hereby my infirmity is made known unto me, for that wicked fancies do always much more easily invade than forsake me.

3. O mighty God of Israel, the zealous lover of faithful souls, let it please thee to consider the labor and sorrow of thy Servant, and assist him in all whatsoever he undertaketh. Strengthen me with Heavenly strength, lest the old Man, the miserable flesh, not fully as yet subject to the spirit, prevail and get the upper hand; against which I ought to fight as long as I breath in this miserable life. Alas, what a kind of life is this, where tribulation and miseries are never wanting! where all is full of snares, and enemies! For when one tribulation or temptation goeth away, another first cometh; yea and during the first conflict also, many others come unlooked for one after another.

4. And how can a life be loved that hath so many embitterments, and is subject to so many calamities and miseries? How is it called a life that begetteth so many deaths

and

and plagues? And yet it is loved, and many ſeek to delight themſelves therein. The world is oftentimes blamed that it is deceitful and vain, and yet it is not eaſily forſaken, becauſe the deſires of the fleſh bear ſo great a ſway.

5. Some things draw us to love it, others to contemn it. To the love of the world, the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life do draw us; but the pains and miſeries that do juſtly follow them cauſe a hatred and loathſomneſs thereof.

6. But alas! vile pleaſure overcometh the mind which is addicted to the world; and ſhe eſteemeth it a delight to be even under thorns, becauſe ſhe hath neither ſeen nor taſted the ſweetneſs of God, and the inward pleaſantneſs of virtue. But they that perfectly contemn the world, and endeavor to live to God under holy diſcipline, theſe are not ignorant of the divine ſweetneſs promiſed to the true forſakers of the world, and do more clearly ſee how grievouſly the world erreth, and how it is many ways deceived.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXI.

### *That we are to rest in God above all his gifts, and benefits.*

*Christian.* Above all things, and in all things, O my soul, thou shalt ever rest in the Lord, for he is the everlasting rest of the Saints. Grant me, O most sweet and loving Jesus, to rest in thee above all creatures, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honor, above all power and dignity, above all knowledg and subtilty, above all riches and arts, above all joy and gladness, above all fame and praise, above all sweetness and comfort, above all hope and promise, above all desert and desire, above all gifts and presents that thou canst give and impart unto us, above all mirth and jubilee that the mind of Man can receive and feel; lastly, above Angels and Archangels and above all the Heavenly host, above all visible and invisible things, and above all that thou art not, O my God.

2. For that thou, my Lord God, art best of all; thou alone art most high, thou alone

alone moſt powerful, thou alone moſt full and ſufficient, thou alone moſt ſweet and ſolacing, thou alone moſt lovely and loving, thou alone moſt noble and glorious above all things, in whom all good things together both perfectly are, and ever have been, and ſhall be: and therefore it is too little and not ſufficient, whatſoever thou beſtoweſt on me beſides thy ſelf, or reveaſt unto me of thy ſelf, or promiſeſt, whileſt thou art not ſeen, and not fully obtained; for ſurely my heart cannot truly reſt nor be fully contented, unleſs it reſt in thee, and ſurmount all gifts and creatures whatſoever.

3. O my moſt beloved Bridegroom Jeſus Chriſt, the moſt pure lover, the governor of all creatures; O that I had the wings of true liberty that I might flie and reſt in thee! O when ſhall it be fully granted me to conſider in quietneſs of mind and ſee how ſweet thou art, my Lord God! When ſhall I fully gather up my ſelf into thee, that by reaſon of my love to thee I may not feel my ſelf, but thee alone, above all ſenſe and feeling, in a manner not known unto every one! but now I oftentimes ſigh, and bear my infelicity with grief, for that ma-

ny evils occurr in this vale of miseries, which do often trouble, grieve, and overcloud me; often hinder and distract me, allure and intangle me, for that I can have no free access unto thee, nor enjoy thy sweet embracings wherewith thou ever favorest the blessed Spirits. O let my sighs and manifold desolations on Earth affect thee.

4. O Jesus, the brightness of eternal glory, and comfort of the pilgrim soul, with thee is my tongue without voice, and my very silence speaketh unto thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come? Let him come unto me his poor Servant, and make me glad. Let him put forth his hand and deliver miserable me from all anguish. Come, O come; for without thee I shall have no joyful day nor hour; for thou art my joy, and without thee my table is empty. A wretched creature I am, and in a manner imprisoned and loaden with Irons, until thou comfortest me with the light of thy presence, and settest me at liberty, and shewest a friendly countenance unto me.

5. Let others seek what they please instead of thee: but for me, nothing else doth

doth nor ſhall delight me, but thou only my God, my hope, my everlaſting ſalvation. I will not hold my peace, nor ceaſe to pray, until thy grace return again, and thou ſpeak inwardly unto me.

*Chriſt.* Behold I am here; behold I come unto thee, becauſe thou haſt called upon me. Thy tears and the deſire of thy ſoul, thy humiliation and the contrition of thy heart, have inclined and brought me unto thee.

*Chriſtian.* And I ſaid, Lord, I have called thee, and have deſired to enjoy thee, being ready to refuſe all things for thee. For thou firſt haſt ſtirred me up that I might ſeek thee. Bleſſed be thou therefore, O Lord, that haſt ſhewed this goodneſs to thy ſervant, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy ſervant more to ſay before thee, but that he do greatly humble himſelf in thy ſight, always mindful of his own iniquity, and vileneſs? For there is none like unto thee in all whatſoever is wonderful in Heaven and Earth. Thy works are very good, thy judgments true, and by thy providence all things are governed. Praiſe therefore and glory be

unto thee, O wisdom of the Father: let my mouth, my soul, and all creatures together praise and bless thee.

## CHAP. XXII.

### *Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God.*

*Christian.* Open, O Lord, my heart in thy Law, and teach me to walk in thy Commandments. Grant me to understand thy will, and to remember thy benefits as well in general, as in particular, with great reverence and diligent consideration; that henceforward I may be able worthily to give thee thanks. But I know, and confess, that I am not able in the least point to give thee, due thanks, for the favors which thou bestowest upon me. I am less than the least of all thy benefits; and when I consider thy noble bounty, the greatness thereof maketh my spirit to faint.

2. All that we have in our soul and body and whatsoever we possess outwardly or inwardly, naturally or supernaturally, are thy

thy benefits, and do ſpeak thee bountiful, merciful, and good, from whom we have received all good things. Although one have received more, another leſs; all notwithſtanding are thine, and without thee even the leaſt cannot be had. He that hath received greater cannot glory of his own deſert, nor extol himſelf above others, nor inſult over the leſſer; for he is greater and better that aſcribeth leaſt unto himſelf, and is more humble and religious in rendring thanks. And he that eſteemeth himſelf vileſt of all Men, and judgeth himſelf moſt unworthy, is fitteſt to receive great bleſſings.

3. And he that hath received fewer, ought not to be ſorry nor take it grievouſly, nor envy them that are enriched with greater ſtore; but attend rather unto thee, and highly praiſe thy goodneſs, for that thou beſtoweſt thy gifts ſo bountifully, ſo freely, and ſo willingly without reſpect of perſons. All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all things thou art to be praiſed. Thou knoweſt what is fit to be given to every one; and why this Man hath leſs, and he more, it is not ours, but thine to judge, who doſt exactly know what is meet for every one.

4. Wherefore, my Lord God, I esteem it as a great mercy, not to have much of that which outwardly and in the opinion of Men, might seem worthy of glory and applause: so that he who considereth the poverty and unworthiness of his person, ought not therefore to conceive grief or sorrow, or to be therefore troubled, but rather to take great comfort, and to be glad: for that thou O God hast chosen the poor and humble and the despised of this world for thy self, and for thy familiar and domestick attendants. Witnesses are thy Apostles themselves, whom thou hast made Princes in all the Earth. And yet they lived without complaint in the world, so humble and simple, without all malice and deceit, that they also rejoyced to suffer reproach for thy Name, and what the world abhorreth, they embraced with great affection.

5. Nothing therefore ought so to rejoyce him that loveth thee and acknowledgeth thy benefits, as thy will in him, and the good pleasure of thy eternal appointment; wherewith he ought to be so contented and comforted, that he would as willingly be the least, as any would wish to be the great-

greateſt, and as peaceable and contented in the laſt as in the firſt place; and as willing to be deſpiſed and contemned and to be of no eſteem or account, as to be preferred in honor before all others and to be greater in the world. For thy will and the love of thy glory ought to be preferred before all things, and to comfort him more, and pleaſe him better, than all the benefits which either he hath received or may receive.

## CHAP. XXIII.

### *Of Four things that bring much peace.*

*Chriſt.* Son, now I will teach thee the way of peace, and true liberty.

*Chriſtian,* Do Lord, I beſeech thee, as thou ſayeſt, for I ſhall be very glad to hear it.

*Chriſt.* Endeavor, my Son, to do rather the will of another, than thine own. Ever chooſe rather to have leſs than more. Always ſeek the loweſt place, and to be inferior to every one. Wiſh always and pray, that the will of God may be wholly ful-

filled in thee. Behold such a Man entreth into the bounds of peace and quietness.

2. *Christian.* Lord, this thy short speech containeth much perfection. It is little in words, but full in sense and abundant in fruit. For if it could faithfully be kept by me, then should I not so easily be troubled. For as often as I feel my self unquiet and afflicted, I find that I have strayed from this Doctrine. But thou that canst do all things, and ever lovest the profiting of my soul, increase in me thy grace, that I may fulfil thy words, and work out mine own salvation.

*A Prayer against evil thoughts.*

3. My Lord God, be not far from me; my God, have regard to help me; for sundry thoughts have risen up against me, and great fears, afflicting my soul. How shall I pass through them without hurt? How shall I utterly break them?

*Christ.* I, saith he, *will go before thee, and will humble the great ones of the earth, I will open the Doors of the Prison, and reveal unto thee hidden secrets.*

*Christian*

*Christian.* Do Lord as thou ſayeſt, and let all my evil thoughts fly from before thy face. This is my hope, my only comfort, to fly unto thee in every tribulation, to truſt in thee, to call upon thee from my heart, and to expect patiently thy comfort.

*A Prayer for enlightning of the Mind.*

4. Enlighten me O good Jeſus, with a clear-ſhining inward light, and drive away all darkneſs from the habitation of my heart. Repreſs my many wandring thoughts, and utterly break in pieces thoſe temptations which violently aſſault me. Fight ſtrongly for me, and vanquiſh thoſe evil beaſts, I mean thoſe inticing deſires of the fleſh, that ſo peace may be obtained, by thy power, and that abundance of thy praiſe may ſound in the holy Court of a pure conſcience. Command the Winds and Tempeſts; ſay unto the Sea, Be ſtill; and to the North Wind, Blow not; and a great calm ſhall enſue.

5. Send forth thy light and thy truth, that they may ſhine upon the earth; for I am as the earth without form and void, until

until thou enlighten me. Pour out thy grace from above, let thy Heavenly dew diſtil upon my heart, ſupply freſh ſtreams of grace, to water the face of the Earth, that it may bring forth good and excellent fruit. Lift up my mind which is preſſed down by the weight of ſins. Draw up my whole deſire to Heavenly things; that having taſted the ſweetneſs of ſupernal happineſs, it may be irkſome to me even to think of earthly vanities.

6. Pluck me and deliver me from all the unlaſting comfort of creatures; for no created thing can fully comfort and quiet my deſire. Joyn me unto thee with an unſeparable band of love; for thou even alone doſt ſatisfie him that loveth thee, and without thee all things are vain.

## CHAP. XXIV.

*Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.*

*Chriſt.* Son, be not curious, trouble not thy ſelf with idle cares. What is this or that to thee? do thou follow me. For what is it to thee, whether that Man be ſuch or no, or whether this Man do, or ſpeak

ſpeak this or that? Thou ſhalt not need to anſwer for others, but ſhalt give account of thy ſelf. Why therefore doſt thou trouble thy ſelf? Behold I know every one, and do ſee all things that are under the Sun, and do underſtand how it is with every one; what he thinks, what he would, and at what his intention aims. All things therefore are to be commited unto me; but do thou keep thy ſelf in good peace, and let the unquiet be as unquiet as they will. Whatſoever they ſhall have done, or ſaid, ſhall fall upon themſelves, for they cannot deceive me.

2. Be not careful for the ſhadow of a great name, or for the familiarity of many; nor for the private affection of Men: for theſe things both diſtract and greatly darken the heart. I would willingly utter my words, and reveal my ſecrets unto thee, if thou didſt diligently obſerve my coming, and didſt open the Door of thy heart unto me. Be careful and watch in prayer, and humble thy ſelf in all things.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXV.

*Wherein the firm peace of the heart, and true ſpiritual profiting conſiſteth?*

*Chriſt.* Son, I have ſaid, *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* All do deſire peace, but all care not for thoſe things that appertain unto true peace. My peace is with the humble and meek of heart. Thy peace doth conſiſt in much patience. If thou wilt hear me and follow my voice, thou mayſt enjoy much peace.

*Chriſtian.* What then ſhall I do, Lord?

*Chriſt.* In every thing attend unto thy ſelf what thou doeſt, and what thou ſayeſt; and direct thy whole intention unto this, that thou mayſt pleaſe me alone, and deſire or ſeek nothing beſides me. Of the ſayings and doings of others judg nothing raſhly: neither do thou entangle thy ſelf with things not commited unto thee: and doing thus, thou ſhalt be little or ſeldom troubled.

2. But never to feel any trouble at all, nor

nor to ſuffer any grief of heart or body, is not the ſtate of this life, but everlaſting reſt. Think not therefore that thou haſt found true peace, if thou feeleſt no ſorrow; nor that then all is well, if thou have no adverſary; nor that all is perfect, if all things be done according to thy deſire. Neither do thou then eſteem highly of thy ſelf, or account thy ſelf to be ſpecially beloved, if thou be in great devotion and ſweetneſs; for by theſe things a true lover of virtue is not known, neither doth the profiting and perfection of a Man conſiſt in theſe things.

3. *Chriſtian.* Wherein then Lord?

*Chriſt.* In offering thy ſelf with all thy heart unto the will of God, not ſeeking thine own intereſt, neither in great nor little, neither for a time nor for ever, ſo that thou keepeſt one and the ſame countenance with thankſgiving, both in proſperity and in adverſity, weighing all things with an equal balance. If thou be of ſuch courage and ſo patient in hope, that when inward comfort is withdrawn from thee, thou prepareſt thy heart to ſuffer greater things; and doſt not juſtify thy ſelf, as though thou oughteſt not to ſuffer theſe and ſo great afflictions, but juſtifieſt me in whatſoever

soever I appoint, and praisest my Holy name: Then thou walkest in the true and right way of peace: And thou shalt have undoubted hope to see my face again with great joy. And if thou attain to the full contempt of thy self; then shalt thou enjoy as great abundance of peace, as this thy state of sojourning in this World is capable of.

## CHAP. XXVI.

*Of the excellency of a free mind, which humble Prayer sooner gaineth than Reading.*

*Christian.* Lord, it is the work of a perfect Man, never to slack his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and as it were to pass without care amongst many cares; not like a dull sluggard; but by the priviledge of a free mind, adhering to no creature with inordinate affection.

2. I beseech thee, my most gracious God, preserve me from the cares of this Life, lest I should be too much entangled thereby: And for the many necessities of the

the body, leſt I ſhould be caught by pleaſure: And from whatſoever is an obſtacle to the Soul, leſt broken with troubles I ſhould be overthrown. I ſay not from thoſe things that worldly vanity ſo greatly deſireth: But from thoſe miſeries, that as puniſhments and as the common curſe of mortality, do weigh down and hinder the Soul of thy Servant, that it cannot enter into freedom of Spirit, as often as it would.

3. O my God, the ineffable ſweetneſs, embitter unto me all carnal comfort, which may draw me away from the love of eternal things, and may wickedly allure me to it ſelf by the beholding of ſome preſent delightſome good. Let me not be overcome, O Lord, let me not be overcome by fleſh and blood. Let not the World and the ſhort glory thereof deceive me. Let not the Devil and his ſubtil fraud ſupplant me. Give me ſtrength to reſiſt, patience to ſuffer, and conſtancy to perſevere. Give me inſtead of all the comforts of the World, the moſt ſweet unction of thy Spirit, and in lieu of carnal Love, pour into my Soul the Love of thy name.

4. Be-

4. Behold, Meat, Drink, Cloaths, and other neceſſaries for the maintenance of the body, are burdenſome unto a fervent Spirit. Grant me to uſe ſuch refreſhments moderately, and not to be intangled with an over great deſire of them. It is not lawful to caſt away all things, for that nature is to be ſuſtained: But to deſire ſuperfluities, and thoſe things that are rather pleaſurable, thy holy Law forbiddeth: For otherwiſe the fleſh would Rebel againſt the Spirit. Herein, I beſeech thee, let thy hand govern me, and teach me, that I may not exceed.

## CHAP. XXVII.

### *That private Love moſt hindreth from the chiefeſt Good.*

*Chriſt.* Son, thou oughteſt to give all for all, and to retain nothing of thy ſelf. Know, that the Love of thy ſelf doth hurt thee more than any thing in the World. According to the Love and affection thou beareſt them, ſo doth every thing cleave unto thee more or leſs. If thy love be pure, ſimple, and well ordered, thou ſhalt

ſhalt be free from the bondage of things. Covet not that which thou mayeſt not have. Be not willing to have that which may hinder thee and deprive thee of inward liberty. It is ſtrange that thou committeſt not thy ſelf wholly unto me, from the bottom of thy heart, with all things that thou canſt deſire or have.

2. Why doſt thou conſume thy ſelf with vain grief? Why art thou tired with needleſs cares? ſtand to my good will, and thou ſhalt ſuffer no detriment at all. If thou ſeekeſt this or that, and wouldeſt be here or there, to enjoy thine own commodity and pleaſure; thou ſhalt never be at quiet, nor free from trouble of mind; for in every thing ſomewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be ſome that will croſs thee.

3. Not every external thing therefore attained and heaped together helpeth thee, but it rather availeth, if thou deſpiſe it, and doſt utterly root it out from thy heart; which thou muſt not underſtand only of thy revenues and wealth, but of thy ſeeking after honor alſo, and thy deſire of vain praiſe, all which do paſs away with this world. The place availeth little if the ſpi-

rit of fervor be wanting; neither ſhall that peace which is ſought abroad long continue, if the ſtate of thy heart be deſtitute of a true foundation; that is, unleſs thou ſtand ſtedfaſt in me, thou mayeſt change, but not better thy ſelf. For when occaſion doth happen, thou ſhalt find not only thoſe things which thou ſoughteſt to fly, but a great deal more.

### *A Prayer for purging the heart, and obtaining of Heavenly wiſdom.*

4. *Chriſtian.* Strengthen me, O God, by the grace of thy holy Spirit. Give me to be ſtrengthened in my inward Man, and to empty my heart of all unprofitable care and anguiſh; not to be drawn away with the ſundry deſires of any thing either mean or precious, but to look upon all things as paſſing away, and that my ſelf do alſo paſs away together with them, for nothing is permanent under the Sun, where all things are vanity and vexation of ſpirit. O how wiſe is he that ſo conſidereth them!

5. Grant mé, Lord, Heavenly wiſdom, that I may learn above all things to ſeek and

and find thee, above all things to reliſh thee, and to love thee, and to think of all other things as they are, according to the diſpoſal of thy wiſdom. Grant me prudently to avoid him that flatters me, and to ſuffer patiently him that contradicts me. For it is a great part of wiſdom not to be moved with every blaſt of words; nor to give ear to an ill flattering *Syren*; for ſo we ſhall go on ſecurely in the way which we have begun.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

### *Againſt the Tongues of Slanderers.*

*Chriſt.* Son, take it not grievouſly if ſome think evil of thee, and ſpeak that which thou wouldeſt not willingly hear. Thou oughteſt to judg the worſt of thy ſelf, and to think no Man weaker than thy ſelf. If thou doſt walk ſpiritually, thou wilt not much eſteem of flying words. It is no ſmall wiſdom to keep ſilence in an evil time, and inwardly to run to me, and not to be troubled with the judgment of Men.

2. Let not thy peace be in the Tongues

of Men; For whether they interpret well or evil, thou art not therefore another Man. Where is true peace, and true glory? Is it not in me? And he that coveteth not to please Men, nor feareth to displease them, shall enjoy much peace. From inordinate love and vain fear ariseth all disquietness of heart and distraction of the mind.

## CHAP. XXIX.

*How we ought to call upon God, and bless him when tribulation draweth near.*

*Christian.* Blessed (O Lord) be thy name for ever; since it pleaseth thee that this temptation and tribulation should come upon me. I cannot flie it; but have need to flie to thee that thou mayest help me, and turn it to my good. Lord I am now afflicted, and it is not well with me. I am much troubled with this present suffering. And now dear Father, what shall I say? I am caught amidst straits, save me from this hour. Yet therefore came I into this hour, that thou mayest be glorified, when

when I ſhall be greatly humbled, and by thee delivered. Let it pleaſe thee Lord, to deliver me; for, poor wretch that I am, what can I doe, and whither ſhall I go without thee? Grant patience Lord, even this time alſo. Help me my God, and then I will not fear how grievouſly ſoever I be afflicted.

2. And now in theſe my troubles what ſhall I ſay? Lord, thy will be done; I have well deſerved to be afflicted and grieved. Surely I ought to bear it; and O that I could bear it with patience, until the tempeſt be paſſed over, and it become calm! But thy omnipotent hand is able to take even this temptation from me, and to aſſwage the violence thereof, that I utterly ſink not under it, as oftentimes heretofore thou haſt done unto me, O my God, my mercy. And how much the more hard it is to me, ſo much the more eaſie is this *change of the right hand of the moſt High.*

## CHAP. XXX.

### *Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.*

*Chriſt.* Son, I am the Lord that giveth ſtrength in the day of tribulation. Come unto me when it is not well with thee. This is that which moſt of all hindereth Heavenly conſolation, that thou art ſlow in turning thy ſelf unto Prayer. For before thou doſt earneſtly pray unto me, thou ſeekeſt in the mean while many comforts, and delighteſt thy ſelf in outward things. And hence it comes to paſs that all doth little profit thee, until thou conſider that I am he that delivers thoſe that truſt in me, and that out of me there is neither powerful help, nor profitable counſel, nor laſting remedy. But now thou having recovered breath after the tempeſt; gather ſtrength again in the light of my mercies; for I am at hand, ſaith the Lord, to repair all, not only entirely, but alſo abundantly and in a very plentiful meaſure.

2. Is

2. Is there any thing hard to me? Or am I like unto him that promiſeth and performeth not? Where is thy faith? Be firm and conſtant. Take courage and be patient; comfort will come to thee in due time. Wait, wait for me, I will come and heal thee. It is a temptation that vexeth thee, and a vain fear that affrighteth thee. What elſe doth the care for future contingencies bring thee, but ſorrow upon ſorrow? *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.* It is a vain and unprofitable thing to be grieved, or to rejoyce for future things, that perhaps will never come to paſs.

3. But it is incident to Man, to be deluded with ſuch imaginations; and a ſign of a weak mind to be ſo eaſily drawn away by the ſuggeſtion of the enemy. For he careth not ſo he delude and deceive thee, whether it be true or falſe which he propoſeth; whether he overthrow thee with the love of preſent, or the fear of future things. Let not therefore thy heart be troubled, neither let it fear. Believe in me, and put thy truſt in my mercy. When thou thinkeſt thy ſelf furtheſt off from me, oftentimes I am neareſt unto thee. When thou judgeſt that almoſt all his loſt, then oftentimes

the greatest advantage of gaining is at hand. All is not lost when any thing falleth out contrary. Thou must not judg according to that which thou feelest for the present; nor so take, or give thy self over to any grief, from whence soever it cometh, as though all hope of delivery were quite gone.

4. Think not thy self wholly left, although for a time I have sent thee some tribulation, or withdrawn thy desired comfort; for this is the way to the Kingdom of Heaven. And without doubt it is more expedient for thee and the rest of my Servants, that ye be exercised with adversities, than that ye should have all things according to your desires. I know the secret thoughts of thy heart, and that it is very expedient for thy welfare, that thou be left sometimes without taste of *spiritual sweetness, and in a dry condition* lest perhaps thou shouldest be puffed up with thy prosperous estate, and shouldest please thy self in that which thou art not. That which I have given I can take away; and restore it again when I please.

5. When I give it, it is mine, when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine;

thine; for mine is every good and every perfect gift. If I send thee affliction, or any Crois whatsoever, repine not, nor let thy heart fail thee; I can quickly succor thee; and turn all thy heavineſs into joy. Nevertheleſs I am righteous, and greatly to be praiſed when I deal thus with thee.

6. If thou be wiſe, and conſidereſt this rightly, thou wilt never mourn ſo dejectedly for any adverſity that befalleth thee, but rather rejoyce and give thanks, yea, account this thy only joy that afflicting thee with ſorrows, I do not ſpare thee. *As my Father hath loved me, I alſo love you,* ſaid I unto my beloved Diſciples; whom certainly I ſent not out to temporal joyes, but to great conflicts; not to honors, but to contempts; not to idleneſs, but to labors; not to reſt, but to bring forth much fruit with patience. My Son, remember theſe words.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXI.

### *Of the contempt of all creatures, to find out the Creator.*

*Christian.* Lord, I stand in need of yet greater grace, that I may reach to that pitch, as that nor Man nor any creature may be a let unto me. For as long as any thing detains me, I cannot freely take my flight unto thee. He desired to fly freely that said, *Who will give me wings like a Dove, and I will fly and be at rest?* What thing more quiet than the single eye? And what more free, than he that desireth nothing upon Earth? Man ought therefore to pass over all creatures, and perfectly to forsake himself, and to remain in excess of mind, and to see that thou the Creator of all things, hast nothing amongst creatures like unto thee. And unless a Man be freed from *the affection of* all creatures, he cannot with freedom of mind attend unto divine things. And for this cause there are so few contemplative Men to be found, for that few can wholly withdraw themselves from things created and perishing.

2. But

2. But to do this there is need of much grace which may raiſe up the ſoul, and enraviſh it above it ſelf. And unleſs a Man be raiſed up in ſpirit, and freed from all creatures, and wholly united unto God; whatſoever he knoweth, and whatſoever he hath, is of little account. A long while ſhall he be little, and lie grovelling below, that eſteemeth any thing great, but the one only infinite and eternal Good. For whatſoever is not God, is nothing, and ought to be accounted as nothing. There is great difference between the wiſdom of an illuminated and religious Man, and the knowledg of a learned and ſtudious Clerk. For more noble is that learning which floweth from above from the divine influence, than that which is painfully gotten by the wit of Man.

3. There are many that deſire contemplation, but they endeavor not to practiſe thoſe things that are required thereunto. Another great let is this, that we reſt in ſigns and ſenſible things, and take little care about the perfect mortification of our ſelves. I know not what it is, nor by what ſpirit we are led, nor what we pretend, we that ſeem to be called ſpiritual, that

that we take so much pains and so great care for transitory and low things, and scarce or seldom think of our own inward concernments, with the full recollection of our minds.

4. Alas, presently after a slight recollection, we break out again, and weigh not our words with diligent examination. We mind not where our affections lie; nor bewail the impurity that is in all our actions. For all flesh had corrupted his way, and therefore did that general flood ensue. Sith our inward affection then is much corrupted, it must needs be that our actions proceeding thence be corrupted, as a sign of the want of inward vigor. From a pure heart proceedeth the fruit of a good life.

5. We ask how much one hath done; but how virtuously or vigorously it was done, is not so diligently considered. We inquire whether he be strong, rich, beautiful, handsome, a good writer, a good singer, or a good laborer, but how poor he is in spirit, how patient and meek, how religious and spiritual, is seldom spoken of. Nature respecteth the outward things of Man, Grace turneth it self to the inward.

That

That is often deceived; This hath her trust in God, to the end she be not deceived.

## CHAP. XXXII.

*Of denial of our selves, and forsaking all inordinate desires.*

*Christ.* Son, thou canst not possess perfect liberty, unless thou wholly deny thy self. All such are fettered *and in bondage* as seek their proper interest wholly, and are lovers of themselves, covetous, curious, wanderers, always seeking pleasure, and not the things of Jesus Christ; but oftentimes devising and framing that which will not continue; for all that is not of God shall perish: Keep this short and compleat saying: *Forsake all, and thou shalt find all. Leave thy inordinate desires, and thou shalt find rest.* Consider this well; and when thou hast fulfilled it, thou shalt understand all.

2. *Christian.* Lord, this is not one days work, nor Childrens sport; yea, in this short

ſhort word all the perfection of religious perſons is included.

*Chriſt.* Son, thou muſt not go back, nor ſtraightways be dejected, when thou heareſt of the way of the perfect; but rather be ſtirred up to higher things, or at leaſt in deſire ſigh after them. I would it were ſo well with thee, and thou wert come up to this pitch, that thou wert no longer a lover of thy ſelf, but didſt ſtand meerly at my beck, and at his whom I have appointed a Father over thee; then thou ſhouldeſt exceedingly pleaſe me, and all thy life would paſs away in joy and peace. Thou haſt yet many things to forſake, which unleſs thou wholly reſign up unto me, thou ſhalt not attain to that which thou deſireſt. *I counſel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayeſt become rich,* that is Heavenly wiſdom, which treadeth under foot all baſe and earthly things. Set little by earthly wiſdom, and care not fondly to pleaſe others or thy ſelf.

3. I ſaid, that the mean things muſt be bought with precious things and ſuch as were with Men of great eſteem. For the true Heavenly wiſdom ſeemeth mean and of ſmall account, and is ſcarce thought of by

by Men; for that esteemeth not highly of it self, nor seeketh to be magnified upon Earth; many praise it from the teeth outward, but in their life they are far from it; yet is it the precious Pearl which is hidden from many.

## CHAP. XXXIII.

### *Of inconstancy of heart, and of directing our final intentions unto God.*

*Christ.* Son, trust not to thy present affection; for it will quickly be changed into another thing. As long as thou livest, thou art subject to mutability, even against thy will; so that now thou art merry, now sad; now quiet, now troubled; now devout, now undevout; now diligent, now slow; now grave, now light. But he that is wise and well instructed in the spirit, standeth fast upon these mutable things; not heeding what he feeleth in himself, or which way the wind of instability bloweth; but that the whole intention of his mind may tend to the right and best end. For thus he may con-

continue one, and the ſelf ſame, and unſhaken in the midſt of ſo many various events, directing continually the ſingle eye of his intention unto me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, with ſo much the more conſtancy doth he paſs through the ſeveral kinds of ſtorms. But in many things the eye of a pure intention waxeth dimſighted, for it quickly looketh upon ſome delightſom object that it meeteth withal; And it is rare to find one that is wholly free from all blemiſh of ſelf-ſeeking. So the Jews in times paſt came into Bethany to *Martha* and *Mary*, not for Jeſus alone, but to ſee *Lazarus* alſo. The eye of our intention therefore is to be purged, that it may be ſingle and right, and to be directed unto me, beyond the manifold diverſity of all mediums, and whatſoever earthly objects come between.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXIV.

*That God is ſweet, above all things, and in all things, to him that loveth.*

*Chriſtian. Behold, my God, and all things.* What would I have more, and what more happy thing can I deſire? O ſweet and ſavory word! but to him that loveth the Word, not the world nor thoſe things that are in the world, *My God, and all things.* Enough is ſaid to him, that underſtandeth; and to him that loveth it is pleaſant to repeat it often. For when thou art preſent, all things do yield delight; but when thou are abſent, every thing becomes irkſom. Thou giveſt quiet of heart and much peace, and pleaſant joy. Thou makeſt us think well of all things, and praiſe thee in all things; neither can any thing pleaſe long without thee; but if it be pleaſant and grateful, thy grace muſt be preſent, and it muſt be ſeaſoned with the ſweetneſs of thy wiſdom.

2. What is not ſavory unto him to whom thou art pleaſing? And whom thou delighteſt not, what can be pleaſant to him?

But the wise of this world, and they that relish the things of the flesh, come short of thy wisdom; for in the world is much vanity, and in the flesh is death. But they that follow thee by the contempt of worldly things, and mortification of the flesh, are proved to be truly wise; For they are changed from vanity to truth, from the flesh to the spirit. These relish God; and what good soever is found in creatures, they wholly refer unto the praise of their Maker. Notwithstanding great yea very great is the difference between the sweetness of the creator and of the creature, of eternity and of time, of light uncreated and of light enlightned.

3. O thou everlasting light, surpassing all created lights, dart the beams of thy brightness from above, which may pierce all the most inward parts of my heart; purifie, rejoyce, enlighten and enliven my spirit, with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto thee with abundance of joy and triumph. O when will that blessed and desired hour come, that I may be filled with thy presence, and thou mayest be unto me all in all! As long as this is not granted me, I shall not have full joy. Alas! the

the old Man yet liveth in me, he is not wholly crucified, he is not perfectly dead. He doth as yet luſt ſtrongly againſt the ſpirit, and ſtirreth up inward wars, and ſuffereth not the Kingdom of my ſoul to be in peace.

4. But thou that ruleſt the power of the Sea, and ſtilleſt the riſing of the Waves thereof, ariſe and help me; ſcatter the People that deſire war, deſtroy them in thy might, diſplay thy greatneſs, and let thy right hand be glorified, for there is no hope nor refuge for me, but in thee my Lord God.

## CHAP. XXXV

*That there is no ſecurity from temptation in this life.*

*Chriſt.* Son, there is no ſecurity in this life; as long as thou liveſt, thou ſhalt always have need of ſpiritual armor. Thou liveſt among enemies, and art aſſaulted on the right hand and on the left. If therefore thou defendeſt not thy ſelf on every ſide with the ſhield of patience, thou

canſt not be long unwounded. Moreover, if thou fix not thy heart on me with a ſincere will to ſuffer all things for me, thou canſt not bear the heat of this battel, nor obtain the triumphant reward of the Saints in bliſs. Thou oughteſt therefore manfully to go through all, and to uſe a ſtrong hand againſt whatſoever withſtandeth thee. For to him that overcometh is manna given; but for the negligent there remains much miſery.

2. If thou ſeekeſt reſt in this world, how wilt thou then attain to everlaſting reſt? Diſpoſe not thy ſelf to much eaſe, but to much patience. Seek true peace, not in Earth, but in Heaven; not in Men nor in any other creature, but in God alone. Thou oughteſt for the love of God willingly to undergo all things, even labors, griefs, temptations, vexations, anxieties, neceſſities, infirmities, injuries, detractions, reprehenſions, humblings, ſhame, corrections, and contempts; theſe help to virtue: theſe try a Novice of Chriſt; theſe make the Heavenly Crown. I will give an everlaſting reward for a ſhort labor, and infinite glory for tranſitory ſhame.

3. Thinkeſt thou that thou ſhalt always have

have ſpiritual conſolations at will? My Saints had not ſo, but they had many afflictions, and ſundry temptations, and many diſcomforts; in all which they did bear up themſelves patiently, and truſted rather in God than in themſelves, knowing that the ſufferings of this time are not condign to the deſerving of future glory. Wilt thou have that ſtraightways, which many after many tears and great labors have hardly obtained? Wait upon the Lord, do manfully, be of good courage; do not deſpair, do not fly, but with conſtancy expoſe both body and ſoul for the glory of God. I will reward thee in moſt plentiful manner, and I will be with thee in all thy tribulations.

## CHAP. XXXVI.

### *Againſt the vain judgments of Men.*

*Chriſt.* Son, caſt thy heart conſtantly upon God, and fear not the judgment of Men, when thy conſcience giveth teſtimony of thy piety and innocency. It is a good and happy thing to ſuffer in ſuch

a way; neither will it be burdenſome to an humble heart, nor to him that truſteth rather in God than in himſelf. The moſt part of Men are given to talk much, and therefore little heed is to be given them; neither is it poſſible to ſatisfie all. Although *Paul* endeavored to pleaſe all in the Lord, and made himſelf all things unto all, yet with him it was a very ſmall thing that he ſhould be judged of Mans judgment.

2. He did for the edification and ſalvation of others as much as he could, and lay in him; yet could he not hinder but that he was ſometimes judged and deſpiſed by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all, and he defended himſelf with patience and humility againſt evil tongues; and ſuch as thought vanities and lies, and ſpake what they liſted: Yet ſometimes notwithſtanding he anſwered, leſt the weak ſhould be offended by his ſilence.

3. Who art thou that feareſt a mortal Man? To day he is, and to morrow he is not ſeen. Fear God, and thou ſhalt not need to fear the terrors of Men. What harm can the words or injuries of any do thee? He rather hurteth himſelf than thee; neither

neither can he avoid the judgment of God, whoſoever he be. Have thou God before thine eyes, and contend not with complaining words. And if for the preſent thou ſeemeſt to be worſted, and to ſuffer ſhame without deſert; do not therefore repine, neither do thou leſſen thy crown by thy impatience; but rather lift up thy eyes to me in Heaven, who am able to deliver thee from all ſhame and wrong, and to render to every one according to their works.

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## CHAP. XXXVII.

*Of a full and pure reſignation of our ſelves, for the obtaining freedom of heart.*

*Chriſt.* Son, forſake thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt find me. Make no ſelf reſpecting choice of any thing, appropriate nothing to thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt ever be a gainer. For greater grace ſhall be given thee, when thou doſt perfectly reſign thy ſelf, and not turn back to take thy ſelf again.

*Chriſtian.* Lord, how often ſhall I re-

ſign my ſelf; and wherein ſhall I forſake my ſelf?

*Chriſt.* Always, and every hour, as well in little things as in great. I do except nothing, but do require that thou be naked *and void* of all things. Otherwiſe how canſt thou be mine, and I thine, unleſs both within and without thou be free from all ſelf will? And how much the ſooner thou doſt this, ſo much the better it will be with thee; and how much the more fully and ſincerely thou doeſt it, ſo much the more ſhalt thou pleaſe me, and ſo much the more ſhalt thou gain.

2. Some there are that reſign themſelves, but with ſome exception; for they put not their whole truſt in God, and therefore they ſtudy how to provide for themſelves. Some alſo at the firſt do offer all, but afterwards being aſſailed with temptations, do return again to that which they had left, and therefore they go not forward in the way of virtue. Theſe ſhall not attain to the true liberty of the pure heart, nor to the favor of my ſweeteſt familiarity, unleſs they firſt make an entire reſignation and a daily oblation of themſelves unto me. For without this there neither

is

is nor can be the fruitive union with me.

3. I have often ſaid unto thee, and now again I ſay the ſame, Forſake thy ſelf, reſign thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt enjoy much inward peace. Give all for all; ſeek nothing, require back nothing, abide purely and with a firm confidence in me, and thou ſhalt enjoy me; thou ſhalt be free in heart, and darkneſs ſhall not have power over thee. Let this be thy whole endeavor, let this be thy Prayer, let this be thy deſire; that being ſtript of all ſelfneſs, thou mayeſt even nakedly follow naked Jeſus, and dying to thy ſelf, mayeſt live eternally to me. Then ſhall all vain imaginations, evil perturbations, and ſuperfluous cares fly away! then ſhall immoderate fear leave thee, and inordinate love ſhall die.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXVIII.

### *Of good government in outward things, and of recourse to God in dangers.*

*Christ.* Son, thou oughtest with all diligence to procure, that in every place and action or external business, thou be inwardly free and Master of thy self, and that all things be under thee, and thou not under them; that thou mayest be Lord and Master of thy actions, not a servant or a hireling, but rather a Free-man and a true Hebrew, passing into the lot and freedom of the Sons of God, who standing upon the things that are present, view the things which are eternal; who look on transitory things with the left eye, and with the right do behold the things of Heaven; whom temporal things cannot draw to cleave unto them, but they rather draw temporal things to serve them, and to be disposed by them in such a way as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creator of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remain stedfast in all events, and

and doſt not weigh by the outward appearance, nor with a carnal eye, the things which thou ſeeſt and heareſt; but preſently in every affair doſt enter with *Moſes* into the Tabernacle to ask councel of the Lord; thou ſhalt ſometimes hear the divine Oracle, and ſhalt return inſtructed concerning many things both preſent and to come. For *Moſes* had always recourſe to the Tabernacle for the deciding of doubts and controverſies, and fled to the help of Prayer, for a defence againſt the iniquity and dangers of Men. So oughteſt thou in like manner to fly to the cloſet of thy heart, earneſtly craving the Divine favor. For the Scripture teſtifieth, that therefore was *Joſhuah* and the Children of *Iſrael* deceived by the Gibeonites, becauſe they asked not councel at the Mouth of the Lord, but giving too lightly credit to their fair words, were deluded with their counterfeit piety.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXXIX.

*That a Man be not over-earnest in his affairs.*

*Christ.* Son, always commit thy cause to me, I will dispose well of it in due time; wait for my ordering of it, and thou shalt find it will be for thy good.

*Christian.* Lord, I do most willingly commit all unto thee, for my care can avail little. O that I cleaved not too much to future events, but offered my self with all readiness of mind to thy good pleasure!

2. *Christ.* Son, oftentimes a Man doth earnestly labor for that which he desireth, and when he hath gotten it, he beginneth to be of another mind; for Mans affections do not long continue fixed on one thing, but do pass from one to another. It is therefore no small thing for a Man to forsake himself even in the smallest things.

3. The true spiritual profiting of a Man consisteth in the denying of himself; and he that is thus resigned, liveth in great freedom and security. But the old enemy, who always sets himself against all that are good,

good, ceaſeth at no time from tempting, but day and night lieth grievouſly in wait, to caſt the unwary, if he can, into the ſnare of deceit. *Therefore Watch and Pray, ſaith our Lord, that ye enter not into temptation.*

## CHAP. XL.

*That Man hath no good of himſelf nor any thing whereof he can glory.*

*Chriſtian.* Lord, what is Man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man, that thou viſiteſt him! What hath Man deſerved that thou ſhouldeſt favor him? Lord, what cauſe have I to complain, if thou forſake me? Or if thou doeſt not that which I deſire, what can I juſtly ſay againſt it? Surely, this I may truly think and ſay, Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing, I have nothing that is good of my ſelf; but in all things I am defective, and do ever tend to nothing; and unleſs thou help me, and doſt inwardly inſtruct me, I become altogether cold, and am diſſolved.

2. But

2. But thou, O Lord, art always the ſame, and endureſt for ever; always good, juſt, and holy, doing all things well, juſtly and holily, and diſpoſing all things with wiſdom. But I that am more ready to go backward than forward, do not ever continue in one eſtate, for Seven times are paſſed over me; yet doth it ſoon turn to the better, when it ſo pleaſeth thee, and when thou vouchſafeſt to ſtretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canſt help me without the aid of Man, and ſo ſtrengthen me, that my countenance ſhall be no more changed, but my heart ſhall be turned to thee alone, and there ſhall reſt.

3. Wherefore if I could once perfectly forſake all humane comfort, either for the attaining of devotion, or for mine own neceſſity, which inforceth me to ſeek after thee, (for none elſe can comfort me) then might I well hope in thy grace, and rejoyce for the gift of new conſolation.

4. Thanks be unto thee, from whence all proceedeth, as often as it goeth well with me; but I am mere vanity and nothing in thy ſight, and unconſtant and weak Man. Whereof then can I glory? Or for what do I deſire to be eſteemed of? Is it

it not even for nothing? But this is most vain. Truly vain glory is an evil plague and a very great vanity; because it draweth Man from true glory, and robbeth him of Heavenly grace. For whilest a Man pleaseth himself, he displeaseth thee; whilst he gapeth after the praise of Men, he is deprived of true virtues.

5. But the true glory and holy rejoycing is for a Man to glory in thee, and not in himself; to rejoyce in thy Name, and not in his own virtue *or strength*, nor to delight in any creature, but for thee. Praised be thy Name, not mine; magnified be thy work, not mine. Let thy holy Name be blessed, but to me let no part of Mens praises be given. Thou art my glory, thou art the joy of my heart. In thee will I glory and rejoyce all the day; but as for my self I will not glory, but in my infirmities.

6. Let the *Jews* seek honor one of another; I will desire this which is from God alone. For all humane glory, all temporal honor, all worldly highness, compared to thy eternal glory, is vanity and folly. O my Truth, my mercy, my God, most blessed Trinity, to thee alone be

praise,

praise, honor, power and glory for evermore.

## CHAP. XLI.

### *Of the contempt of all temporal honors.*

*Christ.* Son, trouble not thy self, if thou seest others honored and advanced, and thy self contemned and debased. Lift up thy heart unto me in Heaven, and the contempt of Men on Earth will not grieve thee.

*Christian.* Lord, we are blind, and quickly seduced with vanity. If I look well into my self, I cannot say that any creature hath done me wrong; and therefore I cannot justly complain of thee.

2. But because I have often and grievously sinned against thee, all creatures do justly take arms against me; for shame and contempt is due unto me, but unto thee praise, honor and glory. And unless I frame my self with a very good will to be despised and forsaken of all creatures, and to be esteemed nothing at all; I cannot obtain inward peace and strength nor be fri-

ſpiritually enlightned, nor fully united unto thee.

## CHAP. XLII.

*That our peace is not to be placed in Men.*

*Chriſt.* Son, if the peace thou haſt with any be grounded upon the opinion which thou haſt of him, or upon the account of thine acquaintance with him, thou ſhalt ever be in an unconſtant and enthralled condition; but if thou have recourſe unto the everliving and eternal Truth, a friend going from thee or dying ſhall not grieve thee. The love of thy friend ought to be grounded in me; and for me is he to be beloved, whoſoever he be whom thou thinkeſt well of, and is very dear unto thee in this life. No friendſhip can avail, or continue without me; neither is that love true and pure, which is not knit by me. Thou oughteſt to be ſo dead to ſuch affections of beloved friends, that (foraſmuch as appertaineth unto thee) thou ſhouldeſt wiſh to be without all company of Men. Man approacheth ſo much the

nearer unto God, by how much the further off he departeth from all Earthly comfort; ſo much the higher alſo he aſcendeth unto God by how much lower he deſcendeth into himſelf, and how much the meaner he is in his own ſight.

2. But he that attributeth any good unto himſelf, hindereth the coming of Gods grace unto him; for the grace of the holy Ghoſt ever ſeeketh an humble heart. If thou couldeſt perfectly annihilate thy ſelf, and empty thy ſelf of all created love; then ſhould I flow into thee with great abundance of grace. When thou caſteſt thy eyes on creatures, the ſight of thy Creator is taken from thee. Learn to overcome thy ſelf in all things, for the love of thy Creator; and then ſhalt thou be able to attain to divine knowledge. How little ſoever the thing be, if it be inordinately loved and regarded; it defileth the ſoul, and hindereth the enjoying of the chiefeſt good.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XLIII.

### *Against vain and secular knowledg.*

*Christ.* Son, let not the fair speeches and subtile sayings of Men move thee. For *the Kingdom of God consisteth not in word, but in power.* Observe well my words; for they enflame hearts, and enlighten minds, they cause compunction, and bring sundry comforts. Do thou never read to shew thy self learned or wise; but labor to mortify thy sins; for that will profit thee more than the knowledg of many difficult questions.

2. When thou shalt have read and known many things, thou oughtest ever to return to one beginning and Principle. I am he, that teacheth Man knowledg, and give unto babes a more clear understanding, than can be taught by Man. He therefore, to whom I speak, shall quickly be wise, and shall profit much in the spirit. Wo be to them that enquire many curious things of Men, and do little mind the way how to serve me. The time will come, when the Master of Masters shall appear, Christ the Lord of Angels, to

hear the lessons of all, that is, to examine the consciences of every one; and then he will search Jerusalem with a candle, and the hidden things of darkness shall be laid open, and the arguings of Mens Tongues shall be silent.

3. I am he that in an instant do raise up the humble mind to understand more of the eternal truth, than can be gotten by Ten years study in the Schools: I teach without the noise of words, without the confounding of opinions, without ambition of honor, without the scuffling of arguments. I am he that teacheth to despise Earthly things, to loath things present, to seek the everlasting, to relish the things that are eternal, to flee honors, to suffer injuries, to place all hope in me, to desire nothing out of me, and above all things ardently to love me.

4. For a certain person by loving me entirely, learned divine things, and spake that which was admirable; he profited more by forsaking all things, than in studying subtilties. To some I speak common things, to others more special things; to some I appear sweetly by signs and figures, but to some I reveal mysteries with much light.

light. The voice of books is indeed one, but it teacheth not all Men alike. For I am the inward teacher, I am the Truth, I am the ſearcher of the heart, the diſcerner of the thoughts, the ſetter forwards of what is good, diſtributing to every one as I judge meet.

## CHAP. XLIV.

*Of not drawing outward things to our ſelves.*

*Chriſt.* Son, in many things thou oughteſt to be ignorant, and eſteem thy ſelf as dead upon Earth, and as one to whom the whole world is crucified. Thou muſt alſo paſs by many things with a deaf ear, and rather think of that which appertaineth to thy peace. It is better for thee to turn thine eyes from what doth miſlike thee, and to leave unto every one his own opinion, than to ſtrive with contentious words. If all ſtand well betwixt thee and God, and if thou haſt his judgment in thy mind, thou ſhalt the more eaſily bear if thou be overcome.

2. *Chriſtian.* O Lord, to what a paſs

are we come! Behold, we bewail a temporal loſs, for a little gain we toil and run; and the ſpiritual damage of our ſoul is forgotten and hardly at length called to mind. That which little or nothing profiteth, is minded; and that which is chiefly neceſſary, is ſlightly paſſed over, becauſe the whole Man doth ſlide down into eternal things; and unleſs he ſpeedily repent, he lieth immerſt in them, and that willingly.

## CHAP. XLV.

*That credit is not to be given to all Men: and how prone Man is to offend in words.*

*Chriſtian.* Help me, O Lord, in my tribulation, for vain is the help of Man. How often have I been deceived, finding want of faith where I thought it ſure? And how often have I found faith where I leaſt expected it? It is vain therefore to truſt in Men; but the ſalvation of the juſt, O Lord, is in thee. Bleſſed be thou my Lord God, in all things that befal us.

us. We are weak and inconſtant, quickly deceived, and ſoon changed.

2. Who is he, that in all things ſo warily and circumſpectly keeps himſelf, that he never falls into any deceit or perplexity? But he that truſteth in thee, O Lord, and ſeeketh thee with a ſingle heart, doth not ſo eaſily fail; and if he fall into any tribulation, be he never ſo much enthralled, yet he ſhall quickly be either delivered or comforted by thee. For thou wilt not forſake him for ever that truſteth in thee. A friend is rare to be found, that continueth faithful in all his friends diſtreſs; but thou, O Lord, thou alone art moſt faithful at all times, and there is none like unto thee.

3. O how wiſe was that holy ſoul that ſaid, My mind is firmly ſettled and grounded in Chriſt! If it were ſo with me, then would not humane fear ſo eaſily trouble me, nor the darts of words move me. Who can foreſee all things? Who is able to beware before-hand of future evils? If things even foreſeen do oftentimes hurt us, how can things unlooked for chooſe but wound us grievouſly? But why did I not provide better for my ſelf, miſerable

Wretch? Why also have I so easily given credit to others? But we are Men, nothing but frail Men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom shall I give credit, Lord? to whom but to thee? Thou art the Truth that neither dost deceive, nor can be deceived. And on the other side, Every Man is a liar, weak, unconstant, and subject to fall, especially in words; and therefore we must not easily give credit even to that, which in outward shew seemeth at the first to be right.

4. O with what wisdom hast thou warned us to beware of Men! And because a Mans foes are they of his own household, not to give credit, if one should say, *Lo here*, or *Lo there*. I am taught to my cost, and O that I might thereby encrease my care, and not my folly. Be wary saith one, be wary, keep to thy self what I tell thee; and whilst I hold my peace, and think it is secret, he cannot keep that secret which he desired should be secret, but presently discloseth me and himself, and goeth his way. From such tales and such indiscreet persons protect me, O Lord, that I fall not into their hands, nor ever commit such things. Give me to observe truth and

and constancy in my words, and remove far from me a deceitful Tongue. What I am not willing to suffer, I ought by all means to avoid.

5. O how good is it and tending to peace, to be silent of others, nor to believe promiscuously all that is said, nor easily to report what we have heard; to lay ones self open to few; always to seek after thee who art the beholder of the heart; not to be carried about with every wind of words, but to desire that all things both within and without, be accomplished according to the pleasure of thy will. How safe is it for the keeping of Heavenly grace, to fly the sight of Men, and not to seek those things that seem to cause admiration abroad, but to follow that with all diligence, which bringeth amendment of life and zeal of godliness.

6. To how many hath virtue known and over hastily commended, been hurtful? How profitable hath grace been kept with silence in this mortal life, which is nothing but a temptation and a warfare?

CHAP.

## CHAP. XLVI.

### *Of putting our truſt in God when evil words ariſe.*

*Chriſt.* Son, be conſtant, and put thy truſt in me. For what are words but words? They fly through the Air, but hurt not ſo much as a ſtone. If thou be guilty, ſee that thou be not unwilling to amend thy ſelf; if thou be innocent, reſolve to ſuffer this willingly for the ſake of God. It is but a ſmall matter to ſuffer ſometimes a few words, if thou haſt not yet the courage to endure hard ſtripes. And why do ſmall matters go to thy heart, but for that thou art yet carnal, and regardeſt Men more than thou oughteſt? Becauſe thou art afraid to be deſpiſed, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, but ſeekeſt the ſhades of excuſes.

2. But look better into thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt ſee that the world is yet alive in thee, and a vain affection to pleaſe Men. For when thou ſhunneſt to be humbled and reproved for thy faults, it is evident that thou

thou art neither truly humble, nor truly dead to the world, nor the world crucified to thee. But give diligent ear to my words, and thou ſhalt little regard Ten thouſand words ſpoken by Men. Behold, if all ſhould be ſpoken againſt thee that could be moſt maliciouſly invented, what would it hurt thee, if thou ſufferedſt it to paſs and madeſt no more reckoning of it than of a mote? could all thoſe words pluck as much as one hair from thy head?

3. But he that hath no heart in him, nor hath God before his eyes, is eaſily moved with a word of diſpraiſe; when as he that truſteth in me, and affects not to confide in his own judgment, ſhall be free from humane fears. For I am the Judge and the diſcerner of all ſecrets: I know how the matter paſſed; I know him that offereth the injury, and him that ſuffereth it. From me hath this proceded; this hath happened by my permiſſion, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. I ſhall judge the guilty, and the innocent; but by a ſecret judgement I would before hand try them both.

4. The Teſtimony of Men oftentimes deceiveth; but my judgement is true, it ſhall

ſhall ſtand and not be overthrown. It is commonly hidden, and not known in every thing, but to few notwithſtanding it never erreth, neither can it erre, although to the eyes of the fooliſh it ſeems not right. Men ought therefore to have recourſe to me in every judgment, and not to leave to their own opinions. For the juſt Man will not be troubled, whatſoever befalleth him from God; and if any thing be wrongfully brought forth againſt him, he will not much care; neither will he vainly be glad, if by others he be with reaſon excuſed. For he conſidereth that I am he that ſearcheth the heart and reins, and do judge not according to the outward face, nor humane appearance. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my ſight, that in the Judgment of Men is thought to be commendable.

5. *Chriſtian.* O Lord God, the juſt judg, ſtrong and patient, thou who knoweſt the frailty and pravity of Man, be thou my ſtrength, and all my truſt, for mine own conſcience ſufficeth me not. Thou knoweſt that which I know not, and therefore in every reproof I ought to have humbled my ſelf, and to have born meekly; vouch-

vouchsafe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I have failed herein, and give me again grace of greater sufferance. For thy abundant mercy is more available to me for the obtaining of pardon, than my conceived justice for the defence of my hidden conscience. Although I know nothing by my self, yet I cannot hereby justifie my self; for without thy mercy no Man living shall be justified in thy sight.

## CHAP. XLVII.

*That all grievous things are to be endured for life everlasting.*

*Christ.* Son, be not dismaied with the painful labors which thou hast undertaken for me, neither be thou wholly discomforted for the tribulations which do befal thee; but let my promise strengthen and comfort thee in all events. I am able to reward thee infinitely and above all measure. Thou shalt not long toil here, nor always be pressed with griefs. Wait a while and thou shalt see a speedy end of thy evils. There will come an hour when all

labor

labor and trouble ſhall ceaſe. Little and ſhort is all that which paſſeth away with time.

2. Do what thou doſt; labor faithfully in my Vineyard, I will be thy reward. Write, read, ſing, mourn, keep ſilence, pray, ſuffer croſſes manfully; life everlaſting is worthy of all theſe yea and greater combats. Peace ſhall come in the day which is known unto the Lord, and there ſhall be neither day nor night, to wit, of this time, but everlaſting light, infinite brightneſs, ſtedfaſt peace, and ſecure reſt. Then thou ſhalt not ſay, *who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Nor cry, *woe is me, that my ſojourning is prolonged!* For death ſhall be thrown down, and ſalvation ſhall appear which never ſhall have end, there ſhall be no anxiety; but bleſſed joy, ſweet and lovely company.

3. O, if thou hadſt ſeen the everlaſting Crowns of the Saints in Heaven, and with how great glory they now rejoyce who in times paſt were contemptible to this world, and eſteemed unworthy of life it ſelf; truly thou wouldeſt preſently humble thy ſelf even unto the Earth; and wouldeſt rather ſeek to be under the feet of all, than to have command

command ſo much as over one; neither wouldeſt thou deſire the pleaſant days of this life, but rather rejoyce to ſuffer affliction for God, and eſteem it thy greateſt gain to be reputed as nothing amongſt Men.

4. O if thou hadſt a reliſhing of theſe things, and didſt ſuffer them to ſink into the bottom of thy heart, how durſt thou ſo much as once to complain? Are not all painful labors to be endured for everlaſting life? It is no ſmall matter, to loſe or to gain the Kingdom of Heaven. Lift up thy face therefore unto Heaven; behold I, and all my Saints with me, who in this world had great conflicts, do now rejoyce, now are comforted, now are ſecure, now are at reſt, and ſhall remain with me everlaſtingly in the Kingdom of my Father.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XLVIII.

### *Of the everlasting day, and shortness of this life.*

*Christian.* O most blessed mansion of the Heavenly City! O most clear day of Eternity, which night obscureth not, but the highest Truth ever enlightneth, a day of continual joy, of perpetual quietness, and never changing into a contrary state! O that that day would once appear, and all these temporal things were at an end! To the Saints it shineth glistering with evelasting brightness, but to those that are Pilgrims upon Earth, it appeareth only afar off, and as it were through a glass.

2. The Citizens of Heaven do know how joyful that day is; but the banished Children of Eve bewail the bitterness and tediousness of this. The daies of this life are short and evil, full of sorrow and anguish; where Man is defiled with many sins, incumbred with many passions, disquieted with many fears, filled with many cares, distracted with many curiosities, intangled

tangled with many vanities, compaſſed about with many errors, worn away with many labors, vexed with temptations, weakned with pleaſures, tormented with want.

3. O, when ſhall theſe evils be at an end! when ſhall I be delivered from the miſerable bondage of ſin! When ſhall I think, O Lord, of thee alone! When ſhall I fully rejoyce in thee! When ſhall I enjoy true liberty without all impediments whatſoever, without all trouble of mind and body! When ſhall I have ſolid peace, ſecure and undiſturbed peace, peace within and without, peace every way aſſured! O good Jeſus when ſhall I ſtand to behold thee! When ſhall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdom! When wilt thou be unto me All in all! O when ſhall I be with thee in thy Kingdom, which thou haſt prepared for thy beloved from all eternity! I am left a poor and baniſhed Man in the land of mine enemies, where there are daily wars and great calamities.

4. Comfort my baniſhment, aſſwage my ſorrow; for my whole deſire fighteth after thee. For all is burdenſome to me whatſoever this world offereth for my com-

fort. I long to enjoy thee moſt inwardly, but I cannot attain unto it. My deſire is, that I may be wholly given up to Heavenly things, but temporal things and unmortified paſſions weigh me down. With the mind I would be above all things, but with the fleſh I am inforced to be ſubject againſt my will. Thus unhappy Man that I am, I fight againſt my ſelf, and am become grievous to my ſelf, whilſt my ſpirit ſeeketh to be above, and my fleſh to be below.

5. O what do I inwardly ſuffer, when in my mind I conſider Heavenly things, and preſently in my prayers a multitude of carnal imaginations preſent themſelves before me! My God, be not far from me, depart not in thy wrath from thy Servant. Caſt forth thy lightning, and diſperſe them; ſend out thy darts, and break all the imaginations which my enemy caſts in. Gather in, call home my ſenſes unto thee, make me forget all the things of this world: grant me to caſt away ſpeedily the imaginations of wickedneſs. Succor me, O thou the everlaſting Truth, that no vanity may move me. Come Heavenly ſweetneſs and let all impurity fly from before thee. Pardon

don me also, and mercifully forgive me as often as I think upon any thing else besides thee in prayer. I do truly confess, that I am wont to be subject to many distractions; for oftentimes I am not there, where I do corporally stand, or sit, but I am rather there, whither my thoughts do carry me. Where my thought is, there am I: there is oftentimes my thought, where my affection is. That quickly offereth it self unto me, which is naturally delightsom, or by custom is pleasing.

6. And for this cause, thou that art Truth it self hast plainly said. *where thy treasure is, there is also thy heart.* If I love Heaven, I willingly think of Heavenly things. If I love the world, I rejoyce at the felicity of the world, and grieve for the adversity thereof. If I love the flesh, I shall fancy oftentimes those things that are pleasing to the flesh; If I love the spirit, I delight to think of spiritual things. For whatsoever I love, thereof do I willingly speak, and hear, and carry home with me the forms, *the Ideas and representations* thereof. But blessed is that Man, that for thee, O Lord, dismisseth all creatures, that violently resisteth nature, and through fervor

of ſpirit crucifieth the luſts of the fleſh, that ſo with a ſerene conſcience he may offer pure prayer unto thee, and be meet to be admitted into the Angelical quire, all earthly things both outwardly and inwardly being excluded.

## CHAP. XLIX.

### *Of the deſire of everlaſting life, and how great rewards are promiſed to thoſe that fight valiantly.*

*Chriſt.* Son, when thou perceiveſt the deſire of everlaſting bliſs to be given thee from above, and deſireſt to depart out of the Tabernacle of this body, that thou mayeſt behold my brightneſs without ſhaddow of turning; open thy heart wide, and receive this holy inſpiration with thy whole deſire. Give greateſt thanks to the Heavenly goodneſs, that dealeth with thee ſo favorably, viſiteth thee mercifully, ſtirreth thee up fervently, holdeth thee up powerfully, leſt through thine own weight thou fall down to the things of Earth. Neither doſt thou obtain this by thy own thought

thought or endeavor, but by the mere dignation of Heavenly grace and divine favor; to the end that thou mayeſt make a further progreſs in holineſs, and obtain greater humility, and prepare thy ſelf for future battels, and endeavor to cleave unto me with the whole affection of thy heart, and ſerve me with a fervent deſire.

2. Son, the fire burneth many times, but the flame aſcendeth not up without ſmoak; ſo likewiſe the deſires of ſome Men burn towards Heavenly things, and yet they are not free from temptation of carnal affection; and therefore it is not altogether purely for the honor of God that which they ſo exactly requeſt of him. Such is alſo oftentimes thy deſire, which thou haſt pretended to be ſo ſerious. For that is not pure and perfect, which is tinctured with the love of thine own proper commodity and intereſt.

3. Ask not that which is delightful and profitable to thee, but that which is acceptable to me, and appertaineth to my honor; for if thou judgeſt aright, thou oughteſt to prefer and follow my appointment, rather than thine own deſire, or any deſired thing. I know thy deſire, and have heard

thy frequent groans. Now thou wouldeſt enjoy the glorious liberty of the Sons of God; now doth the everlaſting habitation, and the Heavenly Country repleniſhed with all joy, delight thee; but that hour is not yet come; as yet there is another time, to wit, a time of war, a time of labor and trial. Thou deſireſt to be filled with the chiefeſt good, but thou canſt not attain it for the preſent. I am he, ſaith the Lord whom thou muſt patiently wait for, until the Kingdom of God doth come.

4. Thou art yet to be tryed upon Earth, and to be exerciſed in many things. Comfort ſhall be ſometimes given thee, but the abundant fulneſs thereof ſhall not be granted. Take courage therefore, and be valiant as well in doing as in ſuffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughteſt to put on the new Man, and to be changed into another Man. Thou muſt oftentimes do that which thou wouldeſt not, and leave undone that thou wouldeſt do. That which is pleaſing to others, ſhall go well forward; that which thou wiſheſt, ſhall not ſpeed. That which others ſay, ſhall be heard; what thou ſayeſt, ſhall be nothing regarded

ed. Others shall ask and shall receive: Thou shalt ask and not obtain.

5. Others shall be great in the praise of Men, but of thee there shall be no speech. To others this or that shall be committed, but thou shalt be accounted fit for nothing. At this nature will sometimes be troubled, and it is much if thou beareſt it with silence. In these and many such like, a faithful Servant of the Lord is wont to be tried how he can deny and break himself in all things. There is scarce any thing, wherein thou hast had such need to dye to thy self, as in seeing and suffering those things that are contrary to thy will; especially when that is commanded, which seemeth unto thee inconvenient, or less profitable. And for that thou being placed under authority dareſt not resist higher power, therefore it seemeth hard to thee to walk at the beck of another, and to leave all thine own opinion.

6. But consider, Son, the fruit of these labors, the end near at hand, and the reward exceeding great; and thou shalt be so far from sustaining them grievously, that thou wilt take great comfort of thy patience. For in regard of that little of thy

will, which now thou willingly forſakeſt, thou ſhalt always have thy will in Heaven. There thou ſhalt find all that thou wilt or canſt deſire; there thou ſhalt enjoy all good without fear of loſing it; there ſhall thy will be ever one with me; it ſhall not covet any outward or private thing. There no Man ſhall withſtand thee, no Man complain of thee, no Man hinder thee, nothing come againſt thee; but all things deſired ſhall be there together preſent, and refreſh thy whole affection, and fill it up to the brim. There I will give thee glory for the reproach which here thou ſufferedſt; the garment of praiſe for heavineſs; for the loweſt place a kingly Throne for ever; there ſhall the fruit of obedience appear, the labor of repentance rejoyce, and humble ſubjection ſhall be glorioufly crowned.

7. Now therefore be humbly obedient unto all, and regard not who ſaid or commanded this; but take great heed, that whether thy Superior, or thy inferior, or thine equal, require any thing of thee, or do inſinuate their deſire; thou take it all in good part, and endeavor to fulfil it with a ſincere will. Let one ſeek this, another that;

that; let him glory in this, the other in that, and be praiſed a thouſand thouſand times; but do thou neither rejoyce in this, nor in that, but in the contempt of thy ſelf, and only in my good pleaſure and honor. This art thou to wiſh, that whether it be thy life or death, God may be always glorified in thee.

## CHAP. L.

*How a diſconſolate perſon ought to offer himſelf into the hands of God.*

*Chriſtian.* Lord God, Holy Father be thou bleſſed both now and for evermore, becauſe as thou wilt, ſo is it done, and what thou doeſt, is good. Let thy Servant rejoyce in thee, not in himſelf nor in any thing elſe; for thou alone art the true gladneſs, thou art my hope and my crown, thou art my joy and my honor. O Lord. What hath thy Servant, but what he hath received from thee, even without any merit of his? Thine is all that thou haſt given, and whatſoever thou haſt made. I am poor, and in labors from my youth;

youth; and sometimes my soul is sorrowful even unto tears; sometimes also it is troubled in it self by reason of evils which hang over mine head.

2. I long after the joy of peace, I earnestly crave the peace of thy Children that are fed by thee in the light of thy comfort. If thou give peace, if thou pour into my heart holy joy; the soul of thy Servant shall be full of gladness, and shall become devout in thy praise; but if thou withdraw thy self, (as many times thou doest) he will not be able to run the ways of thy commandments, but rather he will bow his knees, and knock his breast, for it is not now with him as it was heretofore, when thy candle shined upon his Head, and he was protected under the shadow of thy wings, from the temptations which violently assaulted him.

3. O righteous Father, and ever to be praised, the hour is come, that thy Servant is to be tryed! Behold dear Father, meet it is that in this hour thy Servant suffer something for thy sake. O Father, evermore to be honored, the hour is come, which from all eternity thou didst foreknow should come; that for a short time thy

thy Servant ſhould outwardly be oppreſſed, but inwardly live for ever with thee; that he ſhould be a little deſpiſed, humbled, and made as an abject in the ſight of Men, and much afflicted with paſſions and infirmities; that he may riſe again with thee in the morning of the new light, and be glorified in Heaven. Holy Father, thou haſt ſo appointed it and will have it ſo; and this is fulfilled which thy ſelf haſt commanded.

4. It is a favor to thy friend that he may ſuffer, and be afflicted in the world for love of thee, how often ſoever, and by whom ſoever, thou permitteſt it to fall upon him. For in the world nothing cometh to paſs, without thy councel, without thy providence, or without a cauſe why. It is good for me, Lord, that thou haſt afflicted me, that I may learn thy righteous judgments, and caſt away all haughtineſs of heart, and preſumption. It is profitable to me, that ſhame hath covered my face that I may rather ſeek to thee for comfort than to Men. I have learned alſo hereby to dread thy unſearchable judgments, who afflicteſt the juſt with the wicked, but not without equity and juſtice.

5. I

5. I give thee thanks, for that thou haſt not ſpared my ſins, but haſt worn me away with bitter ſtripes, inflicting ſorrows, and ſending griefs within and without. There is none under Heaven that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the Heavenly Phyſician of ſouls, that ſtrikeſt and healeſt, bringeſt down to Hell and bringeſt back again; let thy correction be upon me, and let thy rod inſtruct me.

6. Behold dear Father, I am in thy hands, I bow my ſelf under the rod of thy correction; ſtrike my back and my neck too, that my crookedneſs may be conformed to thy will. Make me an holy and humble diſciple of thine, (as thou art wont well to do) that I may be ready at every beck of thy divine pleaſure. I commend my ſelf and all mine unto thee to be corrected. It is better to be corrected here, than hereafter. Thou knoweſt all and every thing, and there is nothing in the conſcience of Man which can be hidden from thee. Before things are done, thou knoweſt that they will come to paſs, and haſt no need that any ſhould teach thee, or admoniſh thee of thoſe things which are done on Earth. Thou knoweſt what is expedient for my profit-

profiting, and how much tribulation is fit to scour off the rust of my sins. Do with me according to thy desired good pleasure, and disdain me not for my sinful life, better and more clearly known to none than to thee alone.

7. Grant me, O Lord, to know that which is to be known, to love that which is to be loved, to praise that which pleaseth thee most, to esteem that which is precious unto thee, to despise that which is contemptible in thy sight; suffer me not to judge according to the sight of the outward eyes, nor to give sentence according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant Men; but to discern of visible and spiritual things with a true judgement, and above all things ever to search after thy good will and pleasure.

8. The minds of Men are often deceived in their judging; the lovers of the world are also deceived in loving only visible things. What is a Man the better, for that he is esteemed great by Man? The deceitful in exalting the deceitful, the vain Man in extolling the vain, the blind in commending the blind, the weak in magnifying the weak, deceiveth him and doth verily

verily more shame him, while he doth vainly praise him. For how much every one is in thy sight, so much he is, and no more.

## CHAP. LI.

*That a Man ought to imploy himself in works of humility, when strength is wanting for higher imployments.*

*Christ.* Son, thou art not able always to continue in the more fervent desire of virtue, nor to persist in the higher pitch of contemplation; but thou must sometimes of necessity by reason of original corruption descend to inferior things, and bear the burden of this corruptible life though against thy will, and with grief. As long as thou carriest a mortal body, thou shalt feel trouble and heaviness of heart. Thou oughtest therefore in the flesh oftentimes to bewail the burden of the flesh; for that thou canst not always continue in spiritual exercises and divine contemplation.

2. It is then expedient for thee to flie to

to humble and exterior works, and to refreſh thy ſelf with good actions; to expect with a firm confidence my coming and Heavenly viſitation, to bear patiently thy baniſhment and the dryneſs of thy mind, till I viſit thee again, and deliver thee from all anxieties. For I will make thee forget thy former pains, and enjoy inward quietneſs. I will lay open before thee the pleaſant fields of Holy Scripture, that with an enlarged heart thou mayeſt begin to run the way of my commandments. And thou ſhalt ſay, *That the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy of the glory to come, that ſhall be revealed in us.*

## CHAP. LII.

*That a Man ought to eſteem himſelf not worthy of comfort, but rather to deſerve ſtripes.*

*Chriſtian.* Lord, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any ſpiritual viſitation; and therefore thou dealeſt juſtly with me, when thou leaveſt me poor and deſolate. For though I could ſhed a Sea of tears, yet I were not worthy of thy comfort

fort. For (alas) I deserve nothing, but to be scourged and punished, in that I have grievously and often offended thee, and have sinned greatly in many things. All things therefore duly considered, I am not worthy even of the least comfort. But thou O gracious and merciful God, who wilt not that thy works should perish, to shew the riches of thy goodness upon the vessels of mercy, even beyond his desert vouchsafest to comfort thy Servant above the manner of Men. For thy comforts are not like to the words of Men.

2. What have I done, O Lord, that thou shouldest bestow any Heavenly comfort upon me? I remember not that I have done any good, but have been always prone to sin, and slow to amendment. This is true, and I cannot deny it. If I should say otherwise, thou wouldest stand against me, and there would be none to defend me. What have I deserved for my sins, but Hell and everlasting fire? I confess in very truth that I am worthy of all scorn and contempt, and it is not fit that I should be remembred amongst thy holy ones. And although I be unwilling to hear this, yet notwithstanding for the truths

truths ſake I will lay open my ſins againſt my ſelf, that ſo the ſooner I may obtain mercy at thy hand.

3. What ſhall I ſay being guilty and full of all confuſion? I have nothing to ſay but this, I have ſinned. Lord, I have ſinned; have mercy on me, pardon me; ſuffer me a little, that I may bewail my grief, before I go unto the land of darkneſs, a land covered with the ſhadow of death; What doſt thou ſo much require of a guilty and miſerable ſinner, as that he be contrite, and humble himſelf for his offences? Of true contrition and humbling of the heart, ariſeth hope of forgiveneſs; the troubled conſcience is reconciled *to God*, the favor of God, which was loſt, is recovered; Man is preſerved from the wrath to come, and God and the penitent ſoul meet together with an holy kiſs.

4. Humble contrition for ſins is an acceptable ſacrifice unto thee, O Lord, ſavoring much ſweeter in thy preſence than the perfume of frankincenſe. This is alſo the pleaſant ointment, which thou wouldeſt ſhould be poured upon thy ſacred feet; for thou never deſpiſeſt a contrite and humbled heart. There is the place of refuge,

from the angry face of the enemy; there is amended and washed away, whatsoever defilement elsewhere was contracted, and whatsoever is polluted.

## CHAP. LIII.

*That the grace of God doth not joyn it self with those that savor of Earthly things.*

*Christ.* Son, my grace is precious, it suffereth not it self to be mingled with external things, nor earthly comforts. Thou oughtest therefore to cast away all hindrances of grace, if thou desire to receive the infusion thereof. Choose therefore a secret place to thy self, love to live alone with thy self, desire the conversation of none; but rather pour out devout Prayers unto God, that thou mayest keep thy mind in compunction, and thy conscience pure. Esteem the whole world as nothing; prefer attendance upon God before all outward things; for thou canst not attend upon me, and be delighted also in transitory vanities. Thou oughtest to sequester thy self from thy acquaintance and friends, and

and to keep thy mind void of all temporal comfort. So the bleſſed Apoſtle *Peter* required, that the faithful of Chriſt ſhould keep themſelves as ſtrangers and pilgrims in this world.

2. O how great a confidence ſhall he have at the hour of death, whom no affection to any Earthly thing detaineth in the world! but the ſickly mind is not yet capable of ſo retired a heart; neither doth the carnal Man underſtand the liberty of him who is inwardly recollected. Notwithſtanding if he will be truly ſpiritual, he ought to renounce as well thoſe which are ſtrangers, as thoſe which are near unto him; and to beware of no Man more than of himſelf. If thou perfectly overcome thy ſelf, thou ſhalt with more eaſe ſubdue the reſt. It is a perfect victory to triumph over our ſelves. For he that keepeth himſelf ſubject in ſuch ſort that his ſenſuality be ſubdued to reaſon, and reaſon in all things be obedient to me; he is truly a conqueror of himſelf, and Lord of the world.

3. If thou deſire to mount unto this height, thou muſt ſet out couragiouſly, and lay the Ax to the root; that thou

mayst pluck up and destroy that hidden inordinate inclination to thy self, and unto all private and Earthly good. Of this sin (that Man too inordinately loveth himself) almost all dependeth, whatsoever is throughly to be overcome; which evil being once overcome, and subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquillity. But for that few endeavor perfectly to die unto themselves, and altogether to go out of themselves, therefore they remain intangled in themselves, and cannot be lifted up in spirit above themselves. But he that desireth to walk freely with me, it is necessary that he mortifie all evil and inordinate affections, and that he should not earnestly adhere unto any creature by private love.

## CHAP. LIV.

### *Of the different motions of Nature and Grace.*

*Christ.* Son, mark diligently the motions of *Nature* and *Grace*; for in a very contrary and subtil manner these are moved,

moved, and can hardly be diſcerned but by him that is ſpiritually and inwardly enlightned. All Men indeed deſire that which is good, and pretend ſome good in their words and deeds; and therefore uuder the ſhew of good, many are deceived. *Nature* is crafty, and ſeduceth, intangleth, and deceiveth many, and always propoſeth her ſelf for her end; but *Grace* walketh in ſimplicity, and avoideth all ſhew of evil, pretendeth not deceits, and doth all things purely for Gods ſake, in whom alſo ſhe finally reſteth.

2. Nature will not willingly die, nor be kept down, nor be overcome, nor be ſubject to any, nor be ſubdued; but *Grace* mindeth ſelf mortification, reſiſteth ſenſuality, ſeeketh to be ſubject, is willing to be kept under, and will not uſe her own liberty; ſhe loveth to be kept under diſcipline, and deſireth not to rule any, but always to live and remain wholly ſubject unto God, and for God is ready humbly to bow unto all Men. *Nature* ſtriveth for her own commodity, and conſidereth what profit ſhe may reap by another; but *Grace* conſidereth not what is profitable and commodious unto her ſelf, but rather what is

profitable to many. *Nature* willingly receiveth honor and reverence; but *Grace* faithfully attributeth all honor and glory unto God.

3. *Nature* feareth shame and contempt; but *Grace* rejoyceth to suffer reproach for the Name of Jesus. *Nature* loveth idleness and bodily rest; but *Grace* cannot be idle, but willingly imbraceth labor. *Nature* seeketh to have those things that be curious and glorious, abhorreth that which is mean and course; but *Grace* delighteth in plain and humble things, despiseth not rough things, nor refuseth to wear that which is old and torn. *Nature* respecteth temporal things, rejoyceth at Earthly gain, sorroweth for loss, is moved with every little injurious word; but *Grace* thinketh on that which is everlasting, and cleaveth not to temporal things, she is not troubled with losses, nor disquieted with hard words; for that she hath placed her treasure and joy in Heaven, where nothing perisheth.

4. *Nature* is covetous, and doth more willingly receive than give, she loveth proper and private things; but *Grace* is bountiful and liberal to all; shunneth private interest,

intereſt, is content with a little, thinketh that it is more bleſſed to give than to receive. *Nature* is bent to the creatures, to her own fleſh, to vanities, and to many vagaries; but *Grace* draweth unto God and unto goodneſs, renounceth creatures, flyeth the world, hateth the deſires of the fleſh, reſtraineth wandrings abroad, bluſheth to be ſeen in publick; *Nature* is willing to have ſome outward comfort, wherein ſhe may be ſenſibly delighted; but *Grace* ſeeketh comfort in God alone, and delighteth above all viſible things in the higheſt good.

5. *Nature* worketh all for her own gain and profit, ſhe can do nothing freely, but for beſtowed benefits ſhe hopeth to obtain either that which is equal, or better, either praiſe or favor, and coveteth to have her works and gifts much eſteemed; but *Grace* ſeeketh no temporal thing, nor deſireth any other reward than God alone; nor asketh more of temporal neceſſaries, than what may ſerve her for the obtaining of things eternal.

3. *Nature* rejoyceth to have many friends and kinsfolks, ſhe glorieth of noble place and birth; pleaſeth the powerful, fawneth

upon the rich, applaudeth those that are like her self; but *Grace* loveth even her enemies, and is not puffed up with multitude of friends; nor esteemeth place or birth, but where it is joyned with greater virtue; she rather favoreth the poor than the rich; hath more compassion of the innocent than the powerful; rejoyceth in the true, not in the deceitful; always exhorteth good Men to labor for the better gifts; and by goodness to resemble the Son of God. *Nature* quickly complaineth of want and trouble; *Grace* constantly endureth need.

7. *Nature* referreth all things to her self, striveth and contendeth for her self; but *Grace* reduceth all to God, from whence originally they proceed; she ascribeth no good to her self, neither doth she arrogantly presume; she contendeth not, nor preferreth her opinion before others; but in every apprehension and opinion submitteth her self unto the eternal wisdom and to the divine judgment. *Nature* coveteth to know secrets, and to hear news; she will appear abroad, and make proof of many things by her own senses; she desireth to be known, and to do those things, for which she may be

be praiſed and admired; but *Grace* careth not for hearing news, nor to underſtand curious matters; for that all this ſpringeth from the old corruption of Man, ſeeing here is nothing new and durable upon Earth. She teacheth therefore to reſtrain the ſenſes, to avoid vain pleaſing and oſtentation, humbly to hide thoſe things that are worthy of praiſe and admiration; and of every thing and every knowledg to ſeek profitable fruit, and the praiſe and honor of God; ſhe will not have her ſelf nor hers publickly praiſed, but deſireth that God ſhould be bleſſed in his gifts, who of mere love beſtoweth all things.

8. This *Grace* is a ſupernatural light, and a certain ſpecial gift of God, and the proper mark of the elect, and pledg of everlaſting ſalvation; which raiſeth up a Man from Earthly things to love the things of Heaven, and of a carnal maketh him a ſpiritual Man. How much the more therefore *Nature* is depreſſed and ſubdued, ſo much the greater *Grace* is infuſed, and the inward Man daily by new viſitations more reformed according to the image of God.

CHAP.

## CHAP. LV.

### *Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of divine Grace.*

*Christian.* O Lord my God, who hast created me after thy Image and likeness, grant me this grace which thou hast shewed to be so great and so necessary to salvation, that I may overcome my wicked nature, which draweth me to sin and to perdition. For I feel in my flesh the Law of sin, contradicting the Law of my mind, and leading me captive to the obeying of sensuality in many things; neither can I resist the passions thereof, unless thy most holy grace fervently infused into my heart, do assist me.

2. Thy grace, O Lord, and great grace is needful, that nature may be overcome, which is ever prone to evil from her youth. For by Adam the first Man, nature being fallen and corrupted by sin, the penalty of this stain hath descended upon all Mankind, in such sort, that nature it self which by thee was created good and upright, is now accounted for the sin and for the infirmity of corrupted nature; for that

that the motion thereof left unto it ſelf draweth to evil and to inferior things. For the little power which remaineth, is like a certain ſpark lying hidden in aſhes. This is natural reaſon it ſelf, encompaſſed about with great darkneſs, yet ſtill retaining power to diſcern good and evil, and the difference between true and falſe; although it be unable to fulfil all that it approveth; and enjoyeth not now the full light of truth, nor the ſoundneſs of her affections.

3. Hence it is, my God, that after the inward Man I delight in thy Law, knowing thy commandments to be good, juſt, and holy, reproving alſo all evil and ſin, teaching that it is to be avoided. But with the fleſh I ſerve the law of ſin, whilſt I rather obey ſenſuality than reaſon. Hence it is that to will to do good is preſent with me, but how to perform it I find not. For this cauſe I often purpoſe many good things, but becauſe I want grace to help my weakneſs, upon a light reſiſtance I go back and faint. Hence it is that I know the way of perfection, and ſee clearly enough what I ought to do; but preſſed down with the weight of mine own corruption

tion, I riſe not unto what is more perfect.

4. O Lord, how exceeding needful is thy grace for me, to begin any good work, to go forward, and to accompliſh it; For without it I can do nothing, but in thee I can do all things, when thy grace doth ſtrengthen me. O Heavenly grace indeed, without which our moſt worthy actions are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be eſteemed. Arts, riches, beauty or ſtrength, wit or eloquence, are of no value with thee, O Lord, without thy grace. For gifts of nature are common to good and bad, but the peculiar gift of the elect is grace and love; and they that bear this honorable mark, are eſteemed worthy of everlaſting life. This grace is ſo eminent, that neither the gift of propheſie, nor the working of miracles; nor any ſpeculation (how high ſoever) is of any eſteem without it. Neither faith nor hope, nor other virtues are acceptable unto thee without love and grace.

5. O moſt bleſſed Grace, that makeſt the poor in ſpirit rich in virtues, and makeſt the rich in many bleſſings to be humble in heart; come, come down unto me, repleniſh

plenish me early with thy comfort, lest my soul should faint for weariness and dryness of mind. I beseech thee, O Lord, that I may find grace in thy sight; for thy grace is sufficient for me, though other things that nature desireth be wanting. If I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not fear any evils, whilst thy grace is with me; that is my strength; that giveth advice and help; that is stronger than all enemies, and wiser than all the wise.

6. Thy grace is the mistress of truth, the teacher of discipline, the light of the heart, the solace in affliction, the driver away of sorrow, the expeller of fear, the nurse of devotion, the mother of tears. What am I without it, but a withered piece of wood, and an unprofitable stalk only meet to be cast away? Let thy grace therefore, O Lord, always prevent me and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good works, through Jesus Christ thy Son. *Amen.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. LVI.

*That we ought to deny our ſelves, and imitate Chriſt by the Croſs.*

*Chriſt.* Son, look how much thou goeſt out of thy ſelf, ſo much mayſt thou enter into me. As to be void of all deſire of external things, maketh inward peace; ſo the forſaking of our ſelves inwardly, joyneth unto God. I will have thee learn the perfect leaving of thy ſelf to my will, without contradiction and complaint. Follow me, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Without the way there is no going aright, without truth there is no knowledge, without life there is no living. I am the way which thou oughteſt to follow; the truth which thou oughteſt to truſt; the life for which thou oughteſt to hope. I am the way inviolable, the truth infallible, the life which cannot end. I am the moſt ſtraight way, the ſupreme truth, the true life, yea the bleſſed life, the uncreated life. If thou remain in my way thou ſhalt keep the truth,

truth, and the truth ſhall make thee free, and thou ſhalt lay hold on everlaſting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. If thou wilt know the truth, believe me. If thou wilt be perfect, ſell all. If thou wilt be my Diſciple, deny thy ſelf. If thou wilt poſſeſs a bleſſed life, deſpiſe this preſent life. If thou wilt be exalted in Heaven, humble thy ſelf upon Earth. If thou wilt reign with me, bear the Croſs with me. For only the Servants of the Croſs find the way of bliſs and true light.

3. *Chriſtian.* Lord Jeſus, foraſmuch as thy way is narrow and contemptible unto the world, grant me grace to imitate thee in ſuffering worldly contempt. For the Servant is not greater than his Lord, nor the Diſciple above his Maſter. Let thy Servant be exerciſed in thy holy life, for therein my ſalvation and the true holineſs doth conſiſt; whatſoever I read or hear beſides it, doth not recreate or delight me fully.

4. *Chriſt.* Son, now that thou knoweſt and haſt read theſe things, happy ſhalt thou be, if thou do them. He that hath my

my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him, and will make him ſit with me in the Kingdom of my Father.

*Chriſtian.* Lord Jeſus, as thou haſt ſaid and promiſed, ſo let it come to paſs, and grant that I may not wholly undeſerve this favor. I have received the Croſs, I have received it from thy hand; I will bear it, and bear it till death, as thou haſt laid it upon me. Truly the life of a good retired perſon is the Croſs, but yet it is a guide to Paradiſe. It is now begun, it is not lawful to go back, neither is it fit to leave that which I have undertaken.

5. Let us then take courage, my Brethren, and go forwards together, Jeſus will be with us. For Jeſus's ſake we have undertaken this Croſs, for Jeſus's ſake let us perſevere in the Croſs. He will be our helper, who is our guide and forerunner. Behold our King goeth before us, who alſo will fight for us; let us follow him manfully, let none be diſmaid; but be we ready to die valiantly in the battle, and let us not blemiſh our glory by flying from the Croſs.

CHAP.

## CHAP. LVII.

*That a Man be not too much dejected, when he falleth into ſome defects.*

*Chriſt.* Son, patience and humility in adverſities are more pleaſing to me, than much comfort and devotion in proſperities. Why art thou grieved for every little trifle ſpoken and done againſt thee? Although it had been much more thou oughteſt not to have been moved. But now let it paſs; it is not the firſt that hath happened, nor is it any new thing, neither ſhall it be the laſt, if thou live long. Thou art manly enough, as long as no adverſity happeneth. Thou canſt give good counſel alſo, and canſt ſtrengthen others with thy words; but when any tribulation ſuddenly comes to thy door, thou art deſtitute of counſel and ſtrength. See therefore thy great frailty which thou often haſt experience of in every ſmall occurrence. It is notwithſtanding intended for thy good, when theſe and ſuch like things befal thee.

2. Put it out of thy heart the beſt thou

canſt, and if it touch thee yet let it not deject thee, nor trouble thee long; bear it at leaſt patiently, if thou canſt not joyfully. Although thou be unwilling to hear it, and conceiveſt indignation thereat, yet reſtrain thy ſelf, and ſuffer no inordinate word to paſs out of thy mouth, whereby the little ones may be offended. The ſtorm which now is raiſed ſhall quickly be appeaſed, and inward grief ſhall be ſweetned by the return of grace. I yet live, ſaith the Lord, and am ready to help thee, and to give thee greater comfort than before, if thou put thy truſt in me and calleſt devoutly upon me.

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy ſelf to greater ſuffering. All is not loſt, if thou feel thy ſelf often afflicted or grievouſly tempted. Thou art a Man, and not God; thou art fleſh, not an Angel. How canſt thou look to continue ever in the ſame ſtate of virtue, when an Angel in Heaven hath fallen, as alſo the firſt Man in Paradiſe? I am he who will ſtrengthen with health them that mourn, and do raiſe up unto divine glory thoſe that know their own infirmity.

4. *Chriſtian.* Lord, bleſſed be thy word,

word, more ſweet unto my mouth than the hony and the hony-comb. What ſhould I do in theſe my ſo great tribulations and ſtraits, unleſs thou didſt comfort me with thy holy words? What matter is it, how much, and what I ſuffer, ſo as I may at length attain to the port of ſalvation? Grant me a good end, grant me a happy paſſage out of this world. Be mindful of me, O my God, and direct me the right way to thy Kingdom, *Amen.*

## CHAP. LVIII.

### *Of not ſearching into high matters and into the ſecret judgments of God.*

*Chriſt.* Son beware thou diſpute not of high matters, nor of the ſecret judgments of God, why this Man is left, and that Man taken into ſo great favor; why alſo this Man is ſo much afflicted, and that Man ſo greatly advanced, theſe things are beyond the reach of Man, neither can any reaſon or diſputation ſearch out the judgment of God. When the enemy therefore ſuggeſteth theſe things unto thee,

or ſome curious people enquire of thee, anſwer that of the Prophet, *Thou art juſt, O Lord, and thy judgment is right.* And again, *The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.* My judgments are to be feared, not to be diſcuſſed; for they are ſuch as cannot be comprehended by the underſtanding of Man.

2. In like manner I adviſe thee not to enquire, nor diſpute of the merits of the Saints, which of them is holier than the other, and which is greater in the Kingdom of Heaven, Theſe things oftentimes breed ſtrife and unprofitable contentions, they nouriſh alſo pride and vain glory; from whence do ſpring envy and diſſentions, whilſt one will proudly prefer this, and the other, another. To deſire to know and ſearch out ſuch things, is to no purpoſe; nor would it pleaſe the Saints; for I am not the God of diſſention, but of peace; which peace conſiſteth rather in true humility, than in ſelf exaltation.

3. Some are carried with zeal of affection, to love theſe or thoſe moſt; but this love is rather humane than divine. I am He who made all the Saints, and have given

ven them grace; I have given them glory, I know what every one hath deſerved; I have prevented them with the bleſſings of my goodneſs. I foreknew my beloved before the beginning of the world. I choſe them out of the world, they choſe not me firſt, I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through ſundry temptations. I have poured into them glorious comforts, I have given them perſeverance, I have crowned their patience.

4. I know both the firſt and the laſt; I embrace all with ineſtimable love. I am to be praiſed in all my Saints; I am to be bleſſed above all things, and to be honored in every one, whom I have thus gloriouſly exalted and predeſtinated without any precedent merits of their own. He therefore that contemneth one of the leaſt of my Saints, honoreth not the greateſt; for that I made both the leſs and the greater; and he that diſpraiſeth any of my Saints, diſpraiſeth alſo me, and all the reſt in the Kingdom of Heaven. There all are one through the bond of love; they think the ſame, they will the ſame, and they all love one another.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they love me more than themselves, and are drawn out of all themselves or any merits of their own. For being ravished above self-love, they are wholly carried out to love me, in whom also they do fruitively rest. Nothing can turn them back, nothing can press them down; for being full of the eternal Truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable love. Let therefore carnal and natural Men who can affect no other but their private joys, forbear to dispute of the state of Saints. They add and take away according to their own fancies, not as it pleaseth the eternal Truth.

6. Many are ignorant, but specially those that be slenderly enlightned; and these can seldom love any with a perfect spiritual love. They are as yet much drawn by a natural affection and humane friendship to this Man or to that; and according to the experience they have of themselves in their Earthly affections, so they frame an imagination of Heavenly things. But there is an incomparable distance between the things which the imperfect ones imagine in their conceits, and those which

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the illuminated ones do ſee by revelation from above.

7. Beware therefore, my Son, that thou treat not curiouſly of theſe things, which exceed thy knowledg; but rather ſo apply thy endeavors, that thou mayeſt at leaſt have the meaneſt place in the Kingdom of Heaven. And if any one did know which of the Saints exceed others in ſanctity, or were greater in the Kingdom of Heaven; what would this knowledg avail him, unleſs he ſhould thereby humble himſelf the more in my ſight, and ſhould riſe up into the greater praiſing of my name? He pleaſeth God much better that thinketh of the greatneſs of his ſins, and the ſmalneſs of his graces, and how far off he is from the perfection of the Saints; than he that diſputeth of their greatneſs or littleneſs.

8. They are well and right well contented, if Men could content themſelves, and refrain from theſe vain diſcourſes. They glory not of their own merits, for they aſcribe no good unto themſelves, but attribute all to me, who of my infinite love have given them all things. They are filled with ſo great love of the Divinity, and with ſuch an overflowing joy, that there

is no glory nor happineſs, that is or can be wanting unto them. All the Saints, how much the higher they be in glory, ſo much the more humble they are in themſelves, and nearer and dearer unto me; And therefore it is written. That they did caſt their Crowns before God, and fell down upon their face before the Lamb, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever.

9. Many inquire who is greateſt in the Kingdom of God, that know not whether they ſhall ever be numbred there amongſt the leaſt. It is a great thing to be even the leaſt in Heaven, where all are great; for that all there ſhall be called, and ſhall be indeed, the Sons of God. *The leaſt ſhall become a Thouſand; and the ſinner of an Hundred years ſhall die.* For when the Diſciples asked who ſhould be greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, they received this anſwer, Unleſs you be converted, and become as little Children, you ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: Whoſoever therefore ſhall humble himſelf as this little Child, the ſame is greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven.

10. Wo be unto them that diſdain to humble

humble themſelves willingly with little Children. For the low gate of the Kingdom of Heaven will not give them entrance. And wo be to the rich, that have their comforts here; for whileſt the poor enter into the Kingdom of God, they ſhall ſtand lamenting without. Rejoyce you that be humble, and you that be poor be you glad, for yours is the Kingdom of God, if you walk according to the truth.

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## CHAP. LIX.

*That all our hope and truſt is to be fixed in God alone.*

*Chriſtian.* Lord, what truſt have I in this life? Or what is the greateſt comfort, that all things under Heaven do yield me? Is it not thou, my Lord God, whoſe mercies are without number? Where hath it been well with me without thee? Or when could it be ill with me, when thou wert preſent? I had rather be poor for thee, than

than rich without thee. I rather choose to be a pilgrim on Earth with thee, than to possess Heaven without thee. Where thou art, there is Heaven; and there is death and Hell, where thou art not. Thou art my desire, and therefore it behoveth me to sigh and cry and pray unto thee. For I have none fully to trust in, none that can seasonably help me in my necessities, but thee alone, my God. Thou art my hope, thou art my trust; thou art my comforter, and most faithful unto me in all things.

2. All Men seek their own gain; thou only seekest my salvation and my profit, and turnest all things to my good. Although thou exposest me to divers temptations and adversities, yet thou ordereſt all this to my advantage, who art wont to try thy beloved ones a Thousand wayes. In which trial thou oughtest no less to be loved and praised, then if thou didst fill me with Heavenly comforts.

3. In thee therefore, O Lord God, I put my whole hope and refuge; in thee I place my tribulation and anguish; for I find all to be weak and unconstant, whatsoever I behold out of thee. For neither can many friends

friends avail, nor ſtrong helpers aid, nor wiſe councellors give any profitable anſwer, nor the Books of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliver, nor any ſecret or pleaſant place defend; if thou thy ſelf doſt not aſſiſt, help, ſtrengthen, comfort, inſtruct, and keep us.

4. For all things that ſeem to belong to the attainment of peace and felicity, without thee are nothing, and do bring indeed no felicity at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, the height of life, the depth of wiſdom, and the ſtrongeſt comfort of thy ſervants is to truſt in thee above all things. To thee therefore do I lift up mine eyes, in thee O my God, the Father of mercies, I put my truſt. Bleſs and ſanctifie my ſoul with thy Heavenly bleſſings, that it may be made thy holy habitation, and the ſeat of thy eternal glory; and that nothing may be found in the Temple of thy glory, that may offend the eyes of thy Majeſty. According to the greatneſs of thy goodneſs, and multitude of thy mercies look upon me, and hear the prayer of thy poor Servant, who is far exiled from thee in the land of

of the shadow of death. Protect and keep the soul of thy Servant, amidst so many dangers of this corruptible life, and by thy grace accompanying me direct it by the way of peace, to the country of everlasting light, *Amen.*

THE

# THE FOURTH BOOK.

*A devout Exhortation unto the holy Communion.*

The voice of Chriſt.

COme unto me, all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refreſh you, ſaith the Lord. The bread which I will give, is my fleſh, for the life of the world. Take ye and eat, that is my body that is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. The words which I have ſpoken unto you, are ſpirit and life.

## CHAP. I.

*With how great reverence Christ ought to be received.*

The voice of the disciple.

THese are thy words, O Christ the everlasting Truth, though not spoken all at one time, nor written in one and the self same place. Because therefore they are thine and true, they are all thankfully and faithfully to be received by me. They are thine, and thou hast spoken them; and they are mine also, because thou hast spoken them for my salvation. I willingly receive them from thy mouth, that they may be the deeper imprinted in my heart. These so gracious words, so full of sweetness and love, do encourage me, but mine own offences do dishearten me, and my impure conscience driveth me back from the receiving of so great mysteries. The sweetness of thy words doth encourage me, but the multitude of my sins doth oppress me.

2. Thou commandest me to come confidently unto thee, if I will have part with thee;

thee; and to receive the food of immortality, if I desire to obtain everlasting life and glory. Come, saist thou, unto me, all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. O sweet and loving word in the ear of a sinner, that thou, my Lord God, shouldest invite the poor and needy to the participation of thy most holy body! But who am I, Lord, that I may presume to approach unto thee? Behold the Heavens cannot contain thee, and thou saist, Come ye all unto me.

3. What meaneth this so gracious a condescension, and this so loving invitation? How shall I dare to come, that know not any good in my self, whereupon I may presume? How shall I bring thee unto my House, that have so often offended thy most gracious countenance? The Angels and the Archangels honor thee, the Saints and just Men do fear thee; and saist thou, Come ye all unto me? Unless thou O Lord, didst say it, who would believe it to be true? And unless thou didst command it, who would attempt to come unto thee? Behold *Noah* a just Man labored a Hundred years in the making of the Ark, that he might be saved with a few, and how can I

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in one hours ſpace prepare my ſelf to receive with reverenee the Maker of the world?

4. *Moſes* thy great Servant, and thy eſpecial friend, made an Ark of incorruptible wood, which alſo he covered with moſt pure Gold, to put the Tables of the Law therein; and I a corruptible creature, how ſhall I dare ſo lightly to receive the Maker of the Law, and the giver of life? *Solomon* the wiſeſt of the Kings of *Iſrael* beſtowed Seven years in building a magnificent Temple to the praiſe of thy Name, and celebrated the feaſt of Dedication thereof Eight days together; he offered a Thouſand peace-offerings, and he ſolemnly ſet the Ark in the place prepared for it, with the ſound of Trumpets, and joy; and I the moſt miſerable and pooreſt of Men, how ſhall I bring thee into my Houſe, that can ſcarce ſpend one half hour religiouſly? And I wiſh I could once ſpend about one half hour in a worthy and due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they endeavor to pleaſe thee, and alas how little is that which I do! How little time do I ſpend to prepare my ſelf to receive! I am ſeldom

ſeldom wholly recollected, very ſeldom free from all diſtraction; and yet ſurely no unbecoming thought ought to appear in the comfortable preſence of thy Deity, nor any creature wholly take me up; for I am not to harbor an Angel, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is great difference between the Ark of the Covenant with its reliques, and thy moſt pure body with its unſpeakable virtues; between thoſe legal Sacrifices, figures of future things, and the true Sacrifice of thy body, the complement of all antient Sacrifices. Why therefore am I not more zealous in thy venerable preſence? Wherefore do I not prepare my ſelf with greater care to receive thy holy things; ſith thoſe holy antient Patriarchs and Prophets, yea Kings alſo and Princes, with the whole people, have ſhewed ſuch an affectionateneſs of devotion to thy divine ſervice?

7. The moſt devout King *David* danced before the Ark of God with all his might, calling to mind the benefits beſtowed in times paſt upon his Forefathers. He made inſtruments of ſundry kinds, he publiſhed Pſalms, and appointed them to be ſung

with joy; he also oftentimes sung to the harp, being inspired with the grace of the holy Ghost. He taught the people of *Israel* to praise God with their whole heart, and with pleasant voices every day to bless and praise him. If so great devotion was then used, and such celebrating of divine praise before the Ark of the Testament; what reverence and devotion is now to be performed by me and all Christian people at the Sacrament, in receiving the most precious body of Christ?

8. O God the invisible Creator of the world, how wonderfully dost thou deal with us! how sweetly and graciously dost thou dispose of all things with thine elect, to whom thou offerest thy self to be received in the Sacrament! O this exceedeth all understanding! This chiefly draweth the hearts of the religious and inflameth their affections. For thy true faithful Servants that dispose their whole life to amendment, by this most precious Sacrament, oftentimes gain much of the grace of devotion, and love of holiness.

9. O the admirable and hidden grace of this Sacrament, which only the faithful ones of Christ do know; but the unbelieving,

lieving, and ſuch as are ſlaves unto ſin, cannot have experience thereof! In this Sacrament ſpiritual grace is given, and ſtrength which was loſt is reſtored in the ſoul, and the beauty disfigured by ſin returneth again. This grace is ſometimes ſo great, that out of the fulneſs of devotion which is here given, not only the mind, but the weak body alſo, feeleth great increaſe of ſtrength.

10. Our coldneſs and negligence ſurely is much to be wailed and pitied, that we are not drawn with greater affection to receive Chriſt, in whom all the hope and merit of thoſe that are to be ſaved doth conſiſt. For he is our ſanctification and redemption; he is the comfort of thoſe who are here but travellers, and the everlaſting fruition of Saints. It is much therefore to be lamented that many do ſo little conſider this comfortable myſtery, which rejoyceth Heaven, and preſerveth the whole world. O the blindneſs and hardneſs of Mans heart, that doth not more deeply weigh ſo unſpeakable a gift; but rather cometh by the daily uſe thereof to regard it little or nothing!

11. For if this moſt holy Sacrament

should be celebrated in one place only, and consecrated by one only Minister in the world; with how great desires dost thou think would Men be affected to that place, and to such a Minister, that they might enjoy the celebration of these divine mysteries? But now there are many Ministers, and Christ is offered in many places; that so the grace and love of God to Man may appear so much the greater, how much the more this sacred Communion is spread through the world. Thanks be unto thee good Jesus, the everlasting shepherd, that hast vouchsafed to refresh us who are poor and in a state of banishment, with thy precious body and blood, and to invite us to the receiving of these mysteries with the words of thy own mouth, saying, Come unto me all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

CHAP

## CHAP. II.

*That the great goodneſs and love of God is exhibited to Man in this Sacrament.*

The voice of the Diſciple.

IN confidence of thy goodneſs and great mercy, O Lord, being ſick, I approach unto my Savior, being hungry and thirſty to the Fountain of life, needy to the King of Heaven, a Servant unto my Lord, a creature to my Creator, being diſconſolate I come to thee my merciful comforter. But whence is this to me, that thou vouchſafeſt to come unto me? Who am I that thou ſhouldeſt give thy ſelf unto me? How dare a ſinner appear before thee? And how is it that thou doſt vouchſafe to come unto a ſinner? Thou knoweſt thy Servant and ſeeſt that he hath no good thing in him, for which thou ſhouldeſt beſtow this favor upon him. I confeſs therefore my unworthineſs, and I acknowledg thy goodneſs; I praiſe thy mercy, and give thee thanks for this thy tranſcendent love. For thou doſt this for thine own ſake, not for any

merits of mine; to the end that thy goodneſs may be better known unto me, thy love more abundantly ſhewed, and thy gracious condeſcenſion may be the more eminently ſet forth. Since therefore it is thy pleaſure, and thou haſt commanded that it ſhould be ſo, this thy favor is alſo dearly pleaſing to me, and I wiſh that my ſins may be no hindrance herein.

2. O moſt ſweet and benign Jeſus, how great reverence and thanks together with perpetual praiſe, is due unto thee for the receiving of thy ſacred body, whoſe preciouſneſs no Man is able to expreſs! But what ſhall I think of at this Communion, now that I am to approach unto my Lord, whom I am not able duly to honor, and yet I deſire to receive him with devotion? What can I think better, and more profitable, than to humble my ſelf wholly before thee, and to exalt thy infinite goodneſs above me? I praiſe thee my God, and will exalt thee for ever; and I do deſpiſe and ſubmit my ſelf unto thee, in a deep ſenſe of my own unworthineſs.

3. Behold thou art the Holy of Holies, and I the skum of ſinners! Behold thou inclineſt unto me, who am not worthy ſo much

much as to look up unto thee! Behold thou comeſt unto me! It is thy will to be with me, thou inviteſt me to thy banquet. Thou wilt give me the food of Heaven, and bread of Angels to eat, which is no other indeed than thy ſelf, the living bread, that deſcendeſt from Heaven, and giveſt life unto the world.

4. Behold from whence doth this love proceed! What a gracious condeſcenſion of thine appeareth herein! How great thanks and praiſes are due unto thee for theſe benefits! O how good and profitable was thy councel, when thou ordainedſt it! How ſweet and pleaſant the banquet, when thou gaveſt thy ſelf to be our food! How wonderful is this thy doing, O Lord, how mighty is thy power, how unſpeakable is thy truth! For thou ſayeſt the word, and all things were made; and this was done which thou commandeſt.

5. A thing of great admiration, that thou, my Lord God, true God, and Man, ſhouldeſt be exhibited unto us by the Elements of Bread and Wine. Thou who art the Lord of all things and ſtandeſt in need of none, had pleaſed to dwell in us by means of this thy Sacrament; preſerve my

heart and body unspotted, that with a chearful and pure conscience I may often celebrate thy mysteries, and receive them to my everlasting health; which thou hast chiefly ordained and instituted for thy honor and for a perpetual memorial,

6. Rejoyce, O my soul, and give thanks unto God for so noble a gift, and so singular a comfort left unto thee in this vale of tears. For as often as thou calleſt to mind this mystery, and receiveſt the body of Christ; so often dost thou remember the work of thy redemption, and art made partaker of all the merits of Christ. For the love of Christ is never diminished, and the greatness of his propitiation is never exhausted. Therefore thou oughteſt always to dispose thy self hereunto by a fresh renewing of thy mind, and to weigh with attentive consideration this great mystery of thy salvation. So great, new, and joyful it ought to seem unto thee, when thou comeſt to these holy mysteries; as if the same day Christ first descending into the womb of the Virgin, were become Man; or hanging on the Cross did suffer and die for salvation of Mankind.

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*That it is profitable to communicate often.*

The voice of the Diſciple.

BEhold, O Lord, I come unto thee, that I may be comforted in thy gift, and be delighted in thy holy banquet, which thou, O God, haſt prepared in thy goodneſs for the poor. Behold in thee is all whatſoever I can or ought to deſire; thou art my ſalvation and my redemption, my hope and my ſtrength, my honor and my glory, make joyful therefore this day the ſoul of thy Servant, for that I have lifted it up to thee. O Lord Jeſus, I deſire to receive thee now with devotion and reverence. I do long to bring thee into my houſe, that with *Zacheus* I may obtain to be bleſſed by thee, and to be numbred amongſt the Children of *Abraham*. My ſoul thirſteth to receive thy body, my heart deſireth to be united with thee.

2. Give thy ſelf to me, and it ſufficeth; for beſides thee no comfort is available. I cannot be without thee, nor live without thy viſitation. And therefore I muſt often come

come unto thee, and receive thee for the welfare of my soul; lest perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprived of thy Heavenly food. For so, most merciful Jesus, thou once didst say, preaching to the people and curing sundry diseases, *I will not send them home fasting, lest they faint in the way.* Deal thou therefore in like manner now with me, who hast vouchsafed to leave thy self in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithful. For thou art the sweet refection of the soul; and he that eateth thee worthily, shall be partaker and heir of everlasting glory. It is necessary for me, that do often fall and sin, and so quickly wax dull and faint, that by frequent prayer and confession, and receiving of thy holy body, I renew, cleanse, and inflame my self; lest perhaps by long abstaining I should fall from my holy purpose.

3. For the imaginations of Man are prone unto evil from his youth, and unless some divine remedy help him, he quickly slideth to worse. This holy Communion therefore draweth back from evil and strengtheneth in good. For if I be now so often slack and cold when I communicate, or celebrate; what would become of me if I received

received not this remedy, and ſought not after ſo great an help? Though every day I be not fit, nor well prepared to communicate; I will endeavor notwithſtanding at due times to receive the divine myſteries, and to be partaker of ſo great a grace. For this is one chief comfort of a faithful ſoul, whileſt ſhe wandreth from thee in this mortal body, that being often mindful of her God, ſhe receive her beloved with a devout mind.

4. O the wonderful condeſcent of thy mercy towards us, that thou O Lord God, the Creator and giver of life to all ſpirits, doſt vouchſafe to come unto a poor ſoul, and with thy whole Deity and Humanity to repleniſh her hunger! O happy mind and bleſſed ſoul, that obtains to receive thee, her Lord God, with devout affection, and in receiving of thee to be filled with ſpiritual joy! O how great a Lord doth ſhe entertain! How beloved a gueſt doth ſhe harbor! How pleaſant a companion doth ſhe receive! How faithful a friend doth ſhe take in! How lovely and noble a ſpouſe doth ſhe embrace! She embraceth him who is to be loved above all that is beloved, and above all things that may

be

be desired. Let Heaven and Earth and all their furniture be silent in thy presence; for what praise and beauty soever they have, it is received from thy bounty, and shall not equal the beauty of thy Name, whose wisdom is infinite.

## CHAP. IV.

*That many benefits are bestowed upon them that communicate devoutly.*

The voice of the Disciple.

MY Lord God, prevent thy Servant with the blessings of thy sweetness, that I may approach worthily and devoutly to thy glorious Sacrament; stir up my heart unto thee, and deliver me from all dulness; visit me with thy salvation, that I may taste in spirit thy sweetness, which plentifully lieth hid in this Sacrament, as in a fountain. Enlighten also my eyes to behold so great a mystery, and strengthen me to believe it with undoubted faith. For it is thy work, and not Mans power; thy sacred institution, not Mans invention. For no Man is of himself able to comprehend

hend and understand these things, which surpass the understanding even of Angels. What therefore shall I unworthy sinner, dust and ashes, be able to search and comprehend of so high and sacred a mystery?

2. O Lord, in the simplicity of my heart, with a good and firm faith, and at thy commandment, I come unto thee with hope and reverence, and do truly believe that thou art present in the Sacrament. Thy will is, that I receive thee, and that by love I unite my self unto thee. Wherefore I implore thy mercy, and do crave thy special grace, to the end I may wholly melt and flow over with love unto thee, and hereafter never harbor any external comfort. For this most high and worthy Sacrament is the health of the soul and body, the remedy of all spiritual weakness; hereby my vices are cured, my passions bridled, temptations overcome or weakned, greater grace is infused, virtue begun increased, faith confirmed, hope strengthened and love inflamed, and enlarged.

3. For thou hast bestowed, and still oftentimes dost bestow many benefits in this Sacrament upon thy beloved ones that com-

communicate devoutly, O my God, the Protector of my ſoul, the ſtrengthner of humane frailty, and the giver of all inward comfort. Thou imparteſt unto them much comfort againſt ſundry tribulations; and lifteſt them up from the depth of their own dejectedneſs, to hope in thy protection; and doſt inwardly refreſh and illuſtrate them with new grace, ſo that they who before Communion felt themſelves heavy and indiſpoſed, afterwards being refreſhed with Heavenly meat and drink, do find in themſelves a great change to the better. And in ſuch a way of diſpenſation thou dealeſt with thy elect, that they may truly acknowledg, and patiently prove, how great their own infirmity is, and what goodneſs and grace they receive from thee. For they of themſelves are cold, dull and undevout; but by thee they are made fervent, chearful, and full of devotion. For who is there, that approaching humbly unto the fountain of ſweetneſs, doth not carry away from thence at leaſt ſome little ſweetneſs? Or who ſtanding by a great fire, receiveth not ſome ſmall heat thereby? Thou art a fountain always full and overflowing, a fire ever burning and never decaying.

4. Where-

4. Wherefore if I cannot draw out of the full fountain it ſelf, nor drink my fill; I will notwithſtanding ſet my lips to the mouth of this Heavenly conduit, that I may draw from thence at leaſt ſome ſmall drop to refreſh my thirſt; that ſo I may not be wholly dried up. And though I be not altogether Heavenly, nor ſo inflamed as the *Cherubins* and *Seraphins*, notwithſtanding I will endeavor to apply my ſelf to devotion, and prepare my heart to obtain ſome ſmall ſpark of divine fire, by humble receiving of this enlivening Sacrament. And whatſoever is hereunto wanting in me, good Jeſus, moſt holy Saviour, do thou ſupply for me, moſt bountifully and graciouſly, who haſt vouchſafed to call us unto thee, ſaying, Come unto me all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refreſh you.

5. I indeed labor in the ſweat of my brows, I am vexed with grief of heart, I am burdened with ſins, I am troubled with temptations, I am intangled and oppreſſed with many evill paſſions; and there is none to help me, none to deliver and ſave me, but thou, O Lord, my Saviour, to whom I commit my ſelf, and all that is mine, that thou mayeſt

mayest keep me and bring me to life everlasting. Receive me to the honor and glory of thy Name, who hast prepared thy Body and Blood to be my meat and drink. Grant, Lord God, my Saviour, that by frequenting thy mysteries, the zeal of my devotion may increase.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and Ministerial function.*

The voice of Christ.

IF thou hadst Angelical purity, and the sanctity of St. *John* Baptist, thou wert not worthy to receive this Sacrament. For it is not within the compass of the deserts of Men, that Man should consecrate the Sacrament of Christ, and receive for food the Bread of Angels. A great mystery, and great is the dignity of the Ministers of God, to whom is given that which is not given to the Angels. It is proper for Ministers rightly instituted in the Church, to have power to celebrate, and consecrate the Body of Christ. The Priest is the Minister

niſter of God, uſing the word of God, by Gods Commandment and appointment; but God is there the principal Author, and inviſible Worker; to whom is ſubject all that he pleaſeth, and all that he commandeth doth obey.

2. Thou oughteſt therefore more to believe God Almighty in this moſt excellent Sacrament, than thine own ſenſe, or any viſible ſign. And therefore thou art to come unto this myſtery with fear and reverence. Conſider attentively with thy ſelf, and ſee what that is, whereof the Miniſtery is delivered unto thee by the impoſition of the hands of the Biſhop. Behold thou art made a Prieſt, and conſecrated to celebrate; ſee now that in due time thou doeſt this faithfully and devoutly, and carry thy ſelf ſo, as thou mayeſt be without reproof. Thou haſt not lightned thy burden, but art now bound with a ſtraiter band of diſcipline; and art obliged to a more perfect degree of ſanctity. A Miniſter ought to be adorned with all graces, and to give example of good life to others. His converſation ſhould not be according to the ordinary and common courſe of Men, but like to the Angels in Heaven, or to perfect Men on Earth.

3. A Minister is the Vicegerent of Christ, to pray humbly with a prostrate mind unto God for himself and the whole People. Neither ought he to cease from prayer till he obtain grace and mercy. When a Minister doth celebrate, he honoreth God, rejoyceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helpeth the living; and maketh himself partaker of all good.

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## CHAP. VI.

### *An interrogation of the exercise before Communion.*

The voice of the Disciple.

WHen I weigh thy worthiness, O Lord, and my unworthiness, I tremble, and am confounded in my self. For if I come not unto thee, I fly from life; and if I unworthily intrude my self, I incur thy displeasure. What therefore shall I do my God, my helper, and my counceller, in necessity?

2. Teach me the right way, appoint me some exercise sutable to this holy Communion. For it is good for me to know how

how I ſhould reverently and religiouſly prepare my heart for thee, for the profitable receiving of thy Sacrament, or for the celebrating of ſo great and divine a Sacrifice.

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## CHAP. VII.

### *Of the diſcuſſing of our own conſcience and purpoſe of amendment.*

The voice of the beloved.

ABove all things, The Miniſter of God ought to come to celebrate, and receive this Sacrament with great humility of heart, and lowly reverence, with a full faith, and a pious intending of the honor of God. Examine diligently thy conſcience, and to thy power purge and cleanſe it with true contrition and humble confeſſion; ſo as there may be nothing in thee, that may be burdenſome unto thee, or that may breed in thee remorſe of conſcience, and hinder thy free acceſs. Repent thee of all thy ſins in general, and in particular bewail and lament thy daily offences. And if thou haſt time, confeſs

unto God in the secret of thy heart, all the evils of thy *disordered* passions.

2. Lament and grieve, that thou art yet so carnal, so worldly, so unmortified in thy passions, so full of the motions of concupiscence, so unwatchful over thy outward senses, so often intangled with many vain fantasies, so vehemently inclined to outward things, so negligent in the interior, so prone to laughter and immodesty, so indisposed to tears and compunction, so prompt to ease and pleasures of the flesh, so dull to strictness and life of zeal, so curious to hear news and see glorious sights, so slack to imbrace what is humble and low, so covetous of abundance, so niggardly in giving, so fast in keeping, so inconsiderate in speech, so unbridled to silence, so loose in manners, so importune in action, so greedy to meat, so deaf to the word of God, so hasty to rest, so slow to labor, so watchful to tales, so drowsie to watch in the service of God, so hasty to the end thereof, so inconstant in attention, so cold in Prayer, so undevout in celebrating, so dry in receiving, so quickly distracted, so seldom wholly gathered into thy self, so suddenly moved to anger, so

apt

apt to take diſpleaſure againſt another, ſo prone to judge, ſo ſevere to reprehend, ſo joyful in proſperity, ſo weak in adverſity, ſo often purpoſing much good, and yet performing little.

3. Theſe and other thy defects being confeſſed, and bewailed with ſorrow and great diſlike of thine own infirmity, make a firm purpoſe always to amend thy life, and to endeavor ſtill after a farther progreſs in holineſs. Then with full reſignation, and with thy whole will, do thou to the honor of my Name, offer up thy ſelf a perpetual ſacrifice on the Altar of thy heart, faithfully committing thy body and ſoul unto me, that ſo thou mayeſt come worthily to celebrate this Euchariſtical ſacrifice, and to receive profitably the Sacrament of my body.

4. For Man hath no oblation more worthy, nor greater, for the deſtroying of ſin, than to offer up himſelf unto God purely and wholly in the holy Communion. And when a Man ſhall have done what lieth in him, and ſhall be truly penitent, and ſhall come to me for pardon and grace, as I live, ſaith the Lord, who will not the death of a ſinner, but rather that he be converted and

live, I will not remember his ſins any more, but they ſhall be all forgiven him.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of the oblation of Chriſt on the Croſs and reſignation of our ſelves.*

The voice of the Beloved.

AS I willingly offered up my ſelf unto God my Father for thy ſins, my hands being ſtretched forth on the Croſs, and my body naked, ſo that nothing remained in me that was not wholly turned into a ſacrifice for the appeaſing of the divine Majeſty; ſo oughteſt thou alſo to offer up thy ſelf willingly unto me every day, as a pure and holy oblation, with all thy might and affections, in as hearty a manner as thou canſt. What do I require of thee more, than that thou entirely reſign thy ſelf unto me? Whatſoever thou giveſt beſides thy ſelf, is of little account in my ſight, for I ſeek not any gift of thine, but thy ſelf.

2. As it would not ſuffice thee to have all

all things whatſoever, beſides me; ſo neither can it pleaſe me, whatſoever thou giveſt, if thou offereſt not thy ſelf. Offer up thy ſelf unto me, and give thy ſelf wholly for God, and thy offering ſhall be acceptable. Behold I offered up my ſelf wholly unto my Father for thee, and gave my whole body and blood for thy food, that I might be wholly thine, and thou remain mine. But if thou abideſt in thy ſelf, and doſt not offer thy ſelf up freely unto my will; thy oblation is not entire, neither will the union between us be perfect. Therefore a free offering up of thy ſelf into the hands of God, ought to go before all thy actions, if thou wilt obtain freedom and grace. For this cauſe ſo few become inwardly free and illuminated, for that they are loth wholly to deny themſelves. My ſaying is undoubtedly true, *unleſs a Man forſake all, he cannot be my Diſciple.* If thou therefore deſireſt to be my Diſciple, offer up thy ſelf unto me with thy whole affections.

## CHAP. IX.

*That we ought to offer up our ſelves, and all that is ours unto God, and to pray for all.*

The voice of the Diſciple.

THine, O Lord, are all things that are in Heaven, and in Earth. I deſire to offer up my ſelf unto thee, as a free oblation, and to remain always thine. O Lord, in the ſimplicity of my heart I offer my ſelf unto thee this day, for a ſacrifice of a perpetual praiſe, to be thy Servant for ever. Receive me with this holy oblation of thy precious body; and may this be for my good and the good of all thy People.

2. I offer unto thee, O Lord, all my ſins and offences, which I have committed before thee and thy holy Angels, from the day wherein I firſt could ſin, to this hour, upon thy merciful altar; that thou mayeſt conſume and burn them all with the fire of thy love, and waſh out all the ſtains of my ſins, and cleanſe my conſcience from all offences, and reſtore to me again thy grace,

grace, which I loſt by ſin, forgiving me all my offences, and receiving me mercifully to the kiſs of peace.

3. What can I do with my ſins, but humbly confeſs and bewail them, and intreat always thy favor? I beſeech thee, hear me graciouſly, when I ſtand before thee my God. All my ſins are very diſpleaſing unto me. I will never commit them any more; but I bewail, and will bewail them as long as I live, and am purpoſed to repent and according to my utmoſt power to pleaſe thee. Forgive me, O God, forgive me my ſins for thy holy Names ſake; ſave my ſoul which thou haſt redeemed with thy moſt precious blood. Behold I commit my ſelf unto thy mercy, I reſign my ſelf into thy Hands. Do with me according to thy goodneſs, not according to my wickedneſs and iniquity.

4. I offer up alſo unto thee all whatſoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou mayeſt amend and ſanctify it, that thou mayeſt make it grateful and acceptable unto thee, and always perfect it more and more; and bring me alſo, who am a ſlothful and unprofit-

profitable creature, to a good and bleſſed end.

5. I offer up alſo unto thee all the godly deſires of pious perſons, the neceſſities of parents, friends, brethren, ſiſters, and of all thoſe that are dear unto me, and that have done good either to my ſelf or to others for thy love, and that have deſired and begged of me to pray for them and all theirs; that they all may receive the help of thy grace and comfort, protection from dangers, deliverance from pain; and being freed from all evils, may joyfully give worthy thanks unto thee.

6. I offer up alſo unto thee my Prayers, eſpecially for them who have in any thing wronged, grieved, or ſlandered me, or have done me any damage or diſpleaſure; and for thoſe alſo, whom I have at any time ſadded, troubled, grieved, and ſcandalized by words or deeds, wittingly or at unawares, that it may pleaſe thee to forgive us all our ſins and offences, one againſt another. Take, O Lord, from our hearts all jealouſy, indignation, wrath, and contention, and whatſoever may hurt charity, and leſſen brotherly love. Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on thoſe that crave thy

thy mercy; give grace unto them that ſtand in need thereof, and grant that we may be counted worthy to enjoy thy grace, and attain to life everlaſting, *Amen.*

## CHAP. X

### *That the holy communion is not lightly to be forborn.*

The voice of the beloved.

THou oughteſt often to have recourſe to the Fountain of grace and of divine mercy, to the Fountain of goodneſs and of all benignity; that thou maiſt be healed of thy ſins and paſſions, and be made more ſtrong and vigilant againſt all the temptations and deceits of the Devil. The enemy knowing the great good and advantage which comes by the holy Communion, endeavoreth by all means and occaſions to withdraw and hinder faithful and pious perſons from it.

2. Some when they purpoſe to fit themſelves for the holy Communion, ſuffer worſe aſſaults of the Devil. For that wicked ſpirit (as it is written in *Job*) cometh

eth amongst the sons of God, to trouble them according to his accustomed malice, or to make them over fearful and perplexed, that so he may diminish their affection, or by subtile assaults take away their faith, to the end they may either altogether forbear the Communion, or at least come unto it but coldly. But there is no heed to be taken of his frauds and suggestions, be they never so filthy and hideous, but all is to be turned back upon his own head. Thou oughtest to contemn and scorn him a miserable wretch, and not to omit the holy Communion for his assaults, and the troubles which he raiseth.

3. Oftentimes also an excessive care for the obtaining such a degree of devotion, and some anxiety about confessing thy sins hindereth thee. Follow herein the counsel of the wise, and put away all doubt and scruple; for it is an hindrance to the grace of God, and prejudiceth the devotion of the mind. For every small vexation and trouble omit not the holy Communion, but the sooner confess thy sins, and willingly forgive others whatsoever offences they have done against thee; and if thou hast offended any, humbly crave pardon

pardon, and God will readily forgive thee.

4. What availeth it to delay long the confeſſion of thy ſins, or to defer the holy Communion? Purge thy ſelf with ſpeed, ſpit out the venome preſently, make haſt to apply this ſovereign remedy, and thou ſhalt find it to be better with thee, than if thou deferredſt it long. If thou omitteſt it to day for this cauſe, perhaps to morrow ſome greater will fall out; and ſo thou maiſt be hindred a long time from the Communion, aud become more unfit. With all poſſible ſpeed ſhake off from thy ſelf all preſent heavineſs and ſloth, for it will not avail thee to continue long in diſquietneſs and trouble of mind, and for daily occurring impediments to withdraw thy ſelf from the divine myſteries. Yea it is very prejudicial to defer the Communion long, for this uſually cauſeth a greater dulneſs and undiſpoſedneſs. Alas, ſome cold and diſſolute people do willingly delay confeſſion and defer the ſacred Communion, leſt they ſhould be engaged to the greater watch over themſelves.

5. O how little is their charity, and how weak is their devotion, that ſo eaſily omit the

the holy Communion! How happy is he and acceptable to God, who so ordereth his life, and keepeth his conscience in such purity, that he is ready and fit to communicate every day, if it were convenient and might be done without others taking notice. If one doth sometimes abstain out of humility, or by reason of some lawful impediment, he is to be commended for the reverence which therein he sheweth. But if it proceedeth of dull slothfulness, he must stir himself up, and do what lieth in him, and God will assist his desire for the good will he hath thereto, which God doth chiefly respect.

6. And when any lawful hindrance doth happen, he must yet always have that good will, and a pious intention to communicate, and so shall he not lose the fruit of the Sacrament. For every good Man may every day and hour profitably and without let receive Christ spiritually; and yet on certain daies, and at time appointed he ought to receive Sacramentally with an affectionate reverence the body of his Redeemer, and rather seek the honor and glory of God, than his own comfort. For he communicateth mystically and is invisibly,

ſibly, as often as he devoutly calleth to mind the myſterie of the Incarnation, and the Paſſion of Chriſt, and is inflamed with his love.

7. He that prepareth not himſelf, but when a Feſtival draweth near, and when cuſtome compelleth him thereunto, ſhall uſually be found to be unprepared for it. Bleſſed is he that offereth himſelf up as a Sacrifice to the Lord, as often as he doth celebrate or communicate. Be not too long, nor too ſhort in celebrating, but keep the accuſtomed manner of thoſe with whom thou liveſt. Thou oughteſt not to be tedious and troubleſom to others, but to obſerve the received cuſtom, according to the appointment of thy Superiors; and rather frame thy ſelf to the profit of others, than to thine own devotion or deſire.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

### *That the Body of Christ, and the holy Scriptures, are most necessary unto a faithful soul.*

The voice of the Disciple.

O Sweetest Lord Jesus, how great sweetness hath an holy soul that feasteth with thee in thy banquet, where there is set no other food to be eaten but thy self, her only beloved, and most to be desired above all the desires of her heart! And verily it should be a sweet thing unto me to pour out tears from the very bottom of my heart in thy presence; and with holy *Magdalene* to wash thy feet with my tears. But where is this devotion? Where is there any so plentiful shedding of holy tears? Surely in the sight of thee and thy holy Angels, my whole heart should be inflamed and even weep for joy. For I enjoy thee in the Sacrament truly present, though hidden under another representation.

2. For to behold thee in thine own divine brightness, mine eyes would not be able

able to endure it, neither could the whole world ſtand in the brightneſs of the glory of thy Majeſty. I do really enjoy and adore him, whom the Angels adore in Heaven; but I, as yet in the mean time, by faith, they by ſight, and without a veil. I ought to be content with the light of true faith, and to walk therein, until the day of everlaſting brightneſs break forth, and the ſhadowes of figures paſs away. But when that ſhall come which is perfect, the uſe of Sacraments ſhall ceaſe. For the bleſſed in Heavenly glory need not any Sacramental remedy, but rejoyce without end in the preſence of God, beholding his glory face to face, and being transformed from glory to glory into the Image of the incomprehenſible Deity, they taſt the word of God made fleſh, as he was from the beginning; and as he remaineth for ever.

3. Whileſt I mind theſe wonderful things, even all ſpiritual comfort whatſoever becometh tedious unto me; for that as long as I behold not my Lord openly in his glory, I make no account at all of whatſoever I ſee or hear in this world. Thou art my witneſs, O God, that nothing can

comfort me, no creature can give me rest, but thou my God, whom I desire to behold everlastingly. But this is not possible whilest I remain in this mortal life. Therefore I must frame my self to much patience, and submit my self to thee in all my desires. For thy Saints also, O Lord, who now rejoyce with thee in the Kingdom of Heaven, whilst they lived, expected in faith and great patience the coming of thy glory. What they believed, I believe; what they hoped for, I also hope for; whither they are come, I trust I shall come by thy grace. In the mean time I will go forward in faith, strengthened by the examples of the Saints; I have also godly books for my comfort and for the glass of my life, and above all these, thy most holy body for a singular remedy and refuge.

4. For I perceive Two things to be chiefly necessary for me in the life without which this miserable life would be unsupportable unto me. Whilst I am kept in the prison of this body, I acknowledge my self to stand in need of Two things, to wit, food, and light. Thou hast therefore given unto me a weak creature, thy sacred Body for the nourishment of my soul and bo-

body; and thou hast set thy word as a light unto my feet; without these Two I could not well live. For the word of God is the light of the soul, and thy Sacrament, the bread of life. These also may be called the Two Tables set on the one side and the other, in the store-house of the holy Church. One is the holy Table having the holy bread, that is, the precious body of Christ; the other is that of the divine Law, containing holy Doctrine, teaching the true faith, and certainly leading to that within the veil, where is the holy of Holies. Thanks be unto thee Lord Jesus, the light of everlasting light, for the table of holy Doctrine, which thou hast afforded us by thy Servants, the Prophets and Apostles and other Teachers.

5. Thanks be unto thee, Creator and Redeemer of Man, who to manifest thy love to the whole world, hast prepared a great supper wherein thou hast set before us to be eaten (not the typical Lamb, but) thine own most sacred Body and Blood, rejoycing all the faithful with thy holy banquet, and replenishing them to the full with thy Cup of salvation, in which are all the delights of Paradise; and the holy

Angels do feaſt with us, but yet with a more happy ſweetneſs.

6. O how great and honorable is the office of Gods Miniſters, to whom it is given with ſacred words to conſecrate (the Sacrament of) the Lord of glory; with their lips to bleſs, with their hands to hold, with their mouth to receive, and alſo to adminiſter to others! O how clean ought to be thoſe hands, how pure that mouth, how holy that body, how unſpotted that heart, where the Author of purity ſo often entreth! Nothing but what is holy, no word but good and profitable ought to proceed from his mouth, which ſo often receiveth the Sacrament of Chriſt.

7. Simple and chaſte ought to be the eyes that uſe to behold the body of Chriſt; the hands pure and lifted up to Heaven, that uſe to receive the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Unto the Prieſts eſpecially it is ſaid in the Law, be ye holy for that I your Lord God am holy.

8. Aſſiſt us, Almighty God, with thy grace, that we who have undertaken the office of Prieſt-hood, may ſerve thee worthily and devoutly in all purity, and with a good conſcience. And if we live not in

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ſo great innocency as we ought to do, grant us notwithſtanding in due manner to bewail the ſins which we have committed; and in the ſpirit of humility and with the full purpoſe of a good will to ſerve thee hereafter more fervently.

## CHAP. XII.

*That he who is to communicate ought to prepare himſelf with great diligence.*

The voice of the beloued.

I Am the lover of purity, and the giver of all ſanctity. I ſeek a pure heart, and there is the place of my reſt. Make ready and adorn for me the great Chamber, and I will keep with thee the Paſſover amongſt my Diſciples. If thou wilt have me come unto thee, and remain with thee; purge out the old leaven, and make clean the habitation of thy heart; ſhut out the whole world, and all the throng of ſins; ſit like a ſparrow ſolitary upon the houſe-top, and think of thy offences in the bitterneſs of thy ſoul. For every lover prepareth the beſt and faireſt room for his beloved; and

herein is known the affection of him that entertaineth his beloved.

2. Know thou notwithstanding, that the merit of no action of thine is able to make this preparation sufficient, although thou shouldest prepare thy self a whole year together, and think on nothing else. Thou art of my mere grace and favor suffered to come to my Table, like a beggar invited to dinner to a rich Man, who hath nothing else to return him for his benefits, but to humble himself and give him thanks. Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently; not for custome, not for necessity, but with fear and reverence, and affection; receive the body of thy beloved Lord God, who vouchsafeth to come unto thee. I am he that have called thee, I have commanded it to be done, I will supply what is wanting in thee; come and receive me.

3. When I bestow the grace of devotion, give thanks to thy God; for it is given thee, not for that thou art worthy, but because I have mercy on thee. If thou have it not, but rather dost feel thy self dry; continue in Prayer, sigh and knock, and give not over until thou art meet to receive some crum or drop of saving grace.

Thou

Thou haſt need of me, not I of thee, neither comeſt thou to ſanctifie me, but I come to ſanctifie and make thee better. Thou comeſt that thou maiſt be ſanctified by me, and united unto me, that thou maiſt receive new grace, and be ſtirred up again to amendment. Neglect not this grace, but prepare thy heart with all diligence, and receive thy beloved into thy ſoul.

4. But thou oughteſt not only to prepare thy ſelf to devotion before Communion, but carefully alſo to conſerve thy ſelf therein, after thou haſt received the Sacrament. Neither is the careful guard of thy ſelf afterwards leſs required, than devout preparation before. For a good guard afterwards, is the beſt preparation again for the obtaining of greater grace; becauſe that a Man becometh therefore very indiſpoſed, if he preſently pour himſelf out overmuch to outward comforts. Beware of much talk, remain in ſome ſecret place, and enjoy thy God. For thou haſt him, whom all the world cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughteſt wholly to give thy ſelf, thatſo thou maiſt live hereafter, not in thy ſelf, but in me, without all ſolicitude.

## CHAP. XIII.

*That a devout soul ought to desire with her whole heart, to be united unto Christ in the Sacrament.*

The voice of the Disciple.

HOw may I obtain this, O Lord, that I may find thee alone, and open my whole heart unto thee, and enjoy thee as my soul desireth? And that no Man may look towards me, nor any creature move me or eye me, but thou alone maist speak unto me, and I to thee, as the beloved is wont to speak to his beloved, and a friend to banquet with his friend? This I pray for, this I desire, that I may be wholly united unto thee, and may withdraw my heart from all created things, and more and more by sacred Communion and often celebrating, learn to relish Heavenly and eternal things. O Lord God, when shall I be wholly united to thee, and absorpt by thee, and be altogether forgetful of my self? Thou in me, and I in thee, and so grant us both to continue in one.

2. Thou art truly my beloved, the choicest

choiceſt amongſt Thouſands, in whom my ſoul is well pleaſed to dwell all the days of her life. Thou art indeed my peacemaker, in whom is greateſt peace and true reſt, without whom is labor and ſorrow and infinite miſery. Thou art indeed a God that hideſt thy ſelf, and thy counſel is not with the wicked, but thy ſpeech is with the humble and ſimple of heart. O Lord, how ſweet is thy ſpirit, who to the end thou mighteſt ſhew thy ſweetneſs toward thy Children, vouchſafeſt to feed them with the bread which deſcendeth from Heaven, and is full of all ſweetneſs! Surely there is no other Nation ſo great, that hath God nigh unto them, as thou our God art preſent to all thy faithful ones, unto whom for their daily comfort, and for the raiſing up of their hearts to Heaven, thou giveſt thy ſelf to be eaten and enjoyed.

3. For what other Nation, is there ſo famous, as the Chriſtian People? or what creature under heaven ſo beloved, as a religious ſoul to whom God himſelf cometh to feed her with his glorious fleſh? O unſpeakable grace! O admirable condeſcent! O infinite love ſingularly beſtowed upon Man!

Man! But what shall I give unto the Lord in return of his grace, for so eminent an expression of thy love? There is no other thing more acceptable that I am able to give, than to give my heart wholly to my God, and to unite it most inwardly unto him. Then shall all my inward parts rejoyce, when my soul shall be perfectly united unto God. Then he will say unto me; if thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee. And I will answer him, Vouchsafe, O Lord, to remain with me, and I will gladly be with thee. This is my whole desire, that my heart be united unto thee.

## CHAP. XIV.

### *Of the fervent desire of some devout Persons, to receive the Body of Christ.*

The voice of the Disciple.

O How great is thy goodness O Lord, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee! When I remember some devout persons who come unto thy Sacrament, O Lord, with greatest devotion and affection, I am oftentimes confounded and blush

bluſh within my ſelf, that I come ſo formally and coldly to thy Table of the holy Communion, that I remain ſo dry, and without heart affection, That I am not wholly inflamed in thy preſence, my God, nor ſo earneſtly drawn and affected, as many devout perſons have been, who out of a vehement deſire of the Communion, and a feeling affection of heart, could not contain themſelves from weeping; but with the deſire both of ſoul and body, they earneſtly longed after thee, O God the living Fountain, being not otherwiſe able to allay nor ſatisfie their hunger, but by receiving thy body with all joy and ſpiritual greedineſs.

2. O the moſt ardent faith of thoſe perſons! A clear argument of thy ſacred preſence. For they truly know their Lord in the breaking of bread, whoſe heart burneth ſo mightily within them, whilſt thou, O bleſſed Jeſus, converſeſt with them. Such deſire and devotion, ſo vehement love and fervency, is oftentimes far from me. Be merciful unto me good Jeſus, ſweet and gracious Lord, and grant me thy poor needy creature, to feed ſometimes, at leaſt in this holy Communion,

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somewhat of thy hearty affectionate love, that my faith may be more strengthened, my hope in thy goodness increased, and that my charity once perfectly enflamed, after the tasting of Heavenly Manna, may never decay.

3. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to give me the grace I desire, and to visit me most mercifully with the spirit of fervor, when it shall please thee. For although I burn not with so great desire as those that are so singularly devoted to thee; yet notwithstanding by thy grace, I desire to have this great inflamed desire, praying and craving that I may participate with all such thy fervent lovers, and be numbred among them in their holy company.

## CHAP. XV.

*That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and denial of our selves.*

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to seek the grace of devotion instantly, to ask it earnestly, to expect it patiently and with confidence to

to receive it gratefully, to keep it humbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit the term and manner of this Heavenly visitation to God, until it shall please him to come unto thee. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thy self, when thou feelest inwardly little or no devotion, and yet not to be too much dejected, nor to grieve inordinately. God often giveth in a short moment, that which he hath long time denied; he giveth sometimes in the end, that which in the beginning of prayer he deferred to grant.

2. If grace should be always presently given, and at hand ever with a wish, the weak Man could not well bear it. Therefore the grace of devotion is to be expected with good hope and humble patience; yet impute it to thy self and thy sins, when it is not given thee, or when it is secretly taken away. It is sometimes a small matter that hindereth and hideth grace *from us*, if yet it be to be called small, and not rather a great matter, that hindereth so great a good. And if thou remove this, be it great or small, and perfectly overcome it, thou shalt have thy desire.

3. For presently as soon as thou from thy whole

whole heart giveſt thy ſelf to God, and ſeekeſt not this nor that, for thine own pleaſure or will, but ſetleſt thy ſelf wholly in him, thou ſhalt find thy ſelf united and quiet; for nothing will reliſh ſo well, and pleaſe thee ſo much, as the good pleaſure of the divine will. Whoſoever therefore, with a ſingle heart lifteth up his intention to God, and purgeth himſelf from all inordinate love or diſlike of any created thing, he ſhall be the moſt fit to receive grace, and meet for the giſt of devotion. For the Lord beſtoweth his bleſſings there, where he findeth the veſſels empty. And how much the more perfectly one forſaketh theſe low things, and the more he dieth to himſelf by contempt of himſelf; ſo much the more ſpeedily grace ſhall come, and enter in more plentifully, and raiſe up higher the heart that is thus free.

4. Then ſhall he ſee, and be filled, and wonder, and his heart ſhall be enlarged within him, becauſe the hand of the Lord is with him, and he hath put himſelf wholly into his hands for ever. Behold, ſo ſhall the Man be bleſſed, that ſeeketh God with his whole heart, and buſieth not his ſoul in vain. This man obtaineth the great

great favor of divine union, in receiving the holy Euchariſt; for that he reſpecteth not his own devotion and comfort, but above all devotion and comfort, the honor and glory of God.

## CHAP. XVI.

*That we ought to manifeſt our neceſſities to Chriſt, and crave his grace.*

The voice of the Diſciple.

O Moſt ſweet, and loving Lord, whom I now deſire to receive with all devotion, thou knoweſt my infirmity and the neceſſity which I endure, with how many ſins and evils I am oppreſſed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled, and defiled. I come unto thee for remedy, I crave of thee comfort and ſuccor; I ſpeak to him that knoweth all things, to whom all my inward parts are open, and who can only perfectly comfort and help me. Thou knoweſt what good things I ſtand in moſt need of, and how poor I am in vertues.

2. Behold, I ſtand before thee poor and naked,

naked, calling for grace, and craving mercy. Refresh thy hungry beggar, inflame my coldness with the fire of thy love; inlighten my blindness with the brightness of thy presence. Turn all earthly things to me into bitterness, all things grievous and cross into patience, all low and created things into contempt and oblivion. Lift up my heart to thee in Heaven, and suffer me not to wander upon Earth. Be thou only sweet unto me from henceforth for evermore; for thou only art my meat and my drink, my love and my joy, my sweetness and all my good.

3. O that with thy presence thou wouldest wholly inflame, burn and conform me unto thy self; that I might be made one spirit with thee by the grace of inward union, and by the meltings of ardent love! Suffer me not to go from thee hungry and dry, but deal mercifully with me, as thou hast oftentimes dealt wonderfully with thy Saints. What marvel is it if I should be wholly inflamed by thee, and die from my self, sith thou art fire always burning and never decaying, love purifying the heart, and enlightning the understanding?

CHAP.

## CHAP. XVII.

### *Of fervent love and vehement desire to receive Christ.*

The voice of the Disciple.

WIth great devotion and ardent love, with most hearty affection and fervor I desire to receive thee, O Lord, as many Saints and devout persons have desired thee, when they received thy Sacrament who were most pleasing unto thee in holiness of life, and most fervent in devotion. O my God, my everlasting love; my whole good, my happiness without end. I would gladly receive thee with the most vehement desire and most worthy reverence, that any of the Saints ever had, or could feel.

2. And although I be unworthy to have all those feelings of devotion, yet I offer unto thee the whole affection of my heart, as if I alone had all those highly pleasing inflamed desires; yea and whatsoever also an holy mind can conceive and desire; all that, with greatest reverence and most inward affection, I offer and present unto thee.

I desire to reserve nothing to my self, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice my self and all mine unto thee, my Lord God my Creator, and my Redeemer. I desire to receive thee this day with such affection, reverence, praise and honor, with such gratitude, worthiness, and love, with such faith, hope, and purity, as thy most holy Mother the glorious Virgin *Mary* received, and desired thee, when she humbly and devoutly answered the Angel, who declared unto her the mystery of the Incarnation, and said, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy word.*

3. And as thy blessed Forerunner, the most excellent amongst the Saints, *John* Baptist, chearfully leaped by reason of the holy Ghost, whilest he was yet shut up in his Mothers womb; and afterwards seeing Jesus walking amongst Men, humbling himself very much, said with devout affection, *The friend of the Bridegroom that standeth and heareth him, rejoyceth with joy for the voice of the Bridegroom;* so I also wish to be inflamed with great and holy desires, and to offer my self up to thee with my whole heart. Wherefore I offer also and present

preſent unto thee the joys, fervent affections, mental exceſſes, and ſupernal illuminations, and Heavenly viſions of all devout hearts, with all the vertues and praiſes celebrated and to be celebrated by all creatures in Heaven and Earth, for my ſelf, and all ſuch as are commended to me in prayer, that by all thou maiſt be worthily praiſed and glorified for ever.

4. Receive, my Lord God, my wiſhes and deſires of giving thee infinite praiſe and thanks, which according to the meaſure of thy unſpeakable greatneſs, are moſt worthily due unto thee. Theſe I yield thee, and deſire to yield thee every day and moment. I do entreat and invite all Heavenly minds, and all the devout Servants, to give thanks and praiſes together with me.

5. Let all People, Tribes, and Tongues praiſe thee, and magnifie thy holy and ſweet Name, with great joy and fervent devotion; and let all that reverently and devoutly celebrate thy moſt high Sacrament and receive it with full faith, find grace and mercy at thy hands, and pray humbly for me a ſinful creature. And when they ſhall have obtained their deſired de-

votion and joyful union, and depart from thy sacred Heavenly Table, well comforted and marvellously refreshed, let them vouchsafe to remember my poor soul.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*That Man be not a curious searcher of the Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his sense to faith.*

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to beware of curious and unprofitable searching into this most profound Sacrament, if thou wilt not be plunged in the depths of doubts. He that is a searcher of Majesty, shall be oppressed by thy glory. God is able to work more than Man can understand. A pious and humble inquiry of truth is tolerable, so it be always ready to be taught, and do endeavor to walk in the sound doctrines of the Fathers.

2. Blessed is that simplicity, that forsaketh the difficult ways of questions, and goeth on in the plain and assured path of Gods Commandments. Many have lost devotion,

tion, whileſt they would ſearch after high things. Faith and a ſincere life required at thy hands, not height of underſtanding, nor a diving deep into the myſteries of God. If thou doſt not underſtand, nor conceive thoſe things that are under thee, how ſhalt thou be able to comprehend thoſe that are above thee? Submit thy ſelf to God, and let thy ſenſe be ſubject to faith; and the light of knowledg ſhall be given thee in that degree as ſhall be profitable and neceſſary for thee.

3. Some are grievouſly tempted about faith and the Sacrament, but this is not to be imputed to them, but rather to the Enemy. Be not thou anxious nor diſpute with thy thoughts, neither do thou give anſwer to the doubts caſt in by the Devil; but believe the words of God, believe his Saints and Prophets, and the wicked Enemy will flie from thee. It is oftentimes very profitable to the Servant of God to ſuffer ſuch things. For the Devil tempteth not unbelievers and ſinners, whom he already ſecurely poſſeſſeth, but he ſundry ways tempteth and vexeth the faithful and religious.

4. Go forward therefore with a ſincere and undoubted faith, and come to the Sacrament

crament with unfeigned reverence. And whatsoever thou art not able to understand, commit securely to Almighty God. God deceiveth thee not; he is deceived that trusteth to much to himself. God walketh with the simple, revealeth himself to the humble, giveth understanding to the little ones, openeth the sense to pure minds, and hideth grace from the curious and proud. Humane reason is weak, and may be deceived, but true faith cannot be deceived.

5. All reason and natural search ought to follow faith, not to go before, nor infringe it. For faith and love do here chiefly excell, and work in a hidden manner in this most holy and excellent Sacrament. God, who is everlasting and of infinite power, doth great and inscrutable things in Heaven and in Earth, and there is no searching out of his wonderful works. If the works of God were such, as might be easily comprehended by humane reason, they were not to be called wonderful and unspeakable.

FINIS.